

# SD

issue 20

*Between living and dreaming is a third thing. Guess it.....*

Antonio Machado

£2.50



## Shadows at Windwhistle



# editorial.com ?

Imagine....

This edition of *Strange Daze* will be looking at several diverse issues in articles from Bill Rose's *Moon Age Daydreams* to Kate Taylor's interpretation on the events of *Chappaquiddick* and Dave Clarke's thought provoking article on rumour-inspired social panics during World War I and their links with the waves of media generated UFO reports in today's society.

*Strange Daze* will continue to explore the breadth and depth of interpretation of subjective experiences, myths, folklore and beliefs and ultimately what all this could mean for us, particularly in the shadow of science now and more importantly science in the future as we reach ever wider parameters in addressing issues concerned with our mysterious universe and the human consciousness.

Into these playing fields comes the virtual reality of the internet and email debate and discussion, which is capturing our imagination and energies in a breathtaking display, as more and more people become hooked and access the internet using their screens to debate, argue and discuss anything and everything that is within our capacity to imagine.

In fact it appears in some cases that it is becoming difficult for people to distinguish between virtual reality and reality, which of course leads to the question once more of how we determine what actually constitutes reality. Who knows the answer to this question as we can only see reality in a very subjective way albeit through a consensus of how to interpret the varying images surrounding us all.

These information highways are bringing us enormous problems in addition to an overkill of endless information, creating a new generation heavily reliant on computer games and the internet to play out their fantasies and illusions in a way that is both robotic, impersonal and disturbing, as the human touch diminishes on a level that has been unknown before the last century.

Lest some of you out there feel this is an exaggerated view of today's incredible technology, I would stress that there is no doubt whatsoever that as a method of passing and receiving information, email and the internet are amazing, fast, efficient (usually) and less time consuming than anything we have ever known as we email our long lists of recipients with electronically generated attachments of information with just one click of the 'send' button. Far better than letter writing, telephone contact, or even getting together with real people for one to one contact. Or is it?

There are email newsgroups, email lists, bulletin boards, public chat rooms, private chat rooms for debate, discussion and social conversation. We can sit behind a screen and become involved in a heated and sometimes destructive debate. And then switch off after using electronic body language to satisfy ourselves we are demonstrating to those other screens that we are smiling, sad, angry or whatever. There are no real voice intonations, no gestures, no real life body language, shrugs, smiles, waves nods or winks, just a screen and no way to clean up with a human smile or a touch. And when you belong to an email list then group members can disagree and debate for all to see. Turning that old proverb on its head we could say- *'Reply to all' in haste: Regret at leisure.*

I believe that in some disturbing ways email and the internet are creating an introverted and depersonalised society and that social skills will gradually decline as we interact on a regular level with a screen, while we surf the net and email unknown people across the world. Imagine where we may all be in another twenty years. Imagine a world without books or more alarmingly imagine a world without books for our children and their children. Or in the immortal words of John Lennon, *Imagine there's no heaven..it's easy if you try.*

Surely it must be of paramount importance that there is the certainty for us all that humanity and the profound and powerful effects of nature can transcend the world of virtual reality, taking us for a walk on the wild side in the company of each other, far away from the electronically created images surrounding us. This is where we can discover things about ourselves and about our planet that will never be found in those lonely places in front of a computer screen. It is 'out there' and not 'in a screen' that those places of the heart and of our imagination can be harnessed, as we and the new generation of thinkers and pioneers head towards that brave new world.

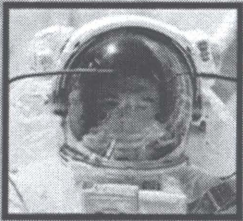
We really would like to hear more from you, our readers, with your comments and thoughts, for publication or privately.

Do please feel free to write,  
email or fax us at any time.





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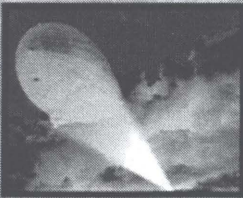


## **MOON AGE DAYDREAMS**

**BILL ROSE**

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A number of far-reaching space projects were considered by America and Russia that would have switched the course of history onto an entirely different track, had any been implemented. Bill Rose takes an alternative look at manned space exploration during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and examines those proposals, which remained secret until very recently.



## **The scare in the air**

**DAVID CLARKE PH.D**

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Few are aware of the historical precedents for rumour inspired panics even in the recent past which bear close comparison with the waves of media-inspired UFO reports which have become such a feature of modern society. David Clarke investigates.....

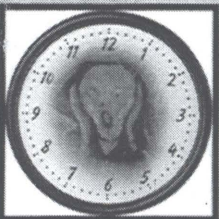


## **TED KENNEDY WAS FRAMED: THE CHAPPAQUIDDICK PLOT**

On the night of 18/19 July 1969, twelve people attended a party on Chappaquiddick, a small island off the coast of Martha's Vinyard, Massachusetts. Two of the partygoers fell victim to a political plot.

**KATE TAYLOR**

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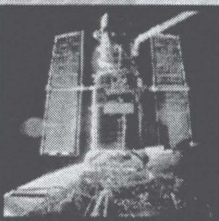


## **MILLENNIUM MADNESS**

Described as the greatest non-event of the second and probably the third millennium, the advent of the year 2000 will provide much useful material for historians and sociologists of the future, as well as teaching a valuable lesson to parapsychologists.

**MICHAEL LEWIS**

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## **Newtonian Science**

Within ten years, if all goes well, we should see the launch of a large space telescope that will make Hubble look like a mere toy - a mouth watering prospect for any researcher.

**DAVE NEWTON**

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## **STRANGE PLACES- IN THE SHADOW OF WINDWHISTLE HILL**

.....they saw in front of them on the left hand verge, two people, one who appeared to be lying down, and the other standing. Their initial thoughts were that someone had been injured and went to slow down, when to their astonishment, the person standing took one step out in front of them.....one foot remained on the grass verge at the roadside and other foot was right over the centre of the road!

**GLORIA HEATHER DIXON**

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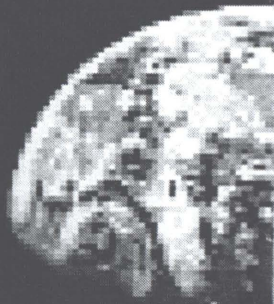


## **EVENTS & INFORMATION**

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# MOON AGE BILL



**T**hroughout the "Cold War" era, most of the big budget space programmes were politically motivated and the overriding objective was always the attainment of prestigious "firsts."

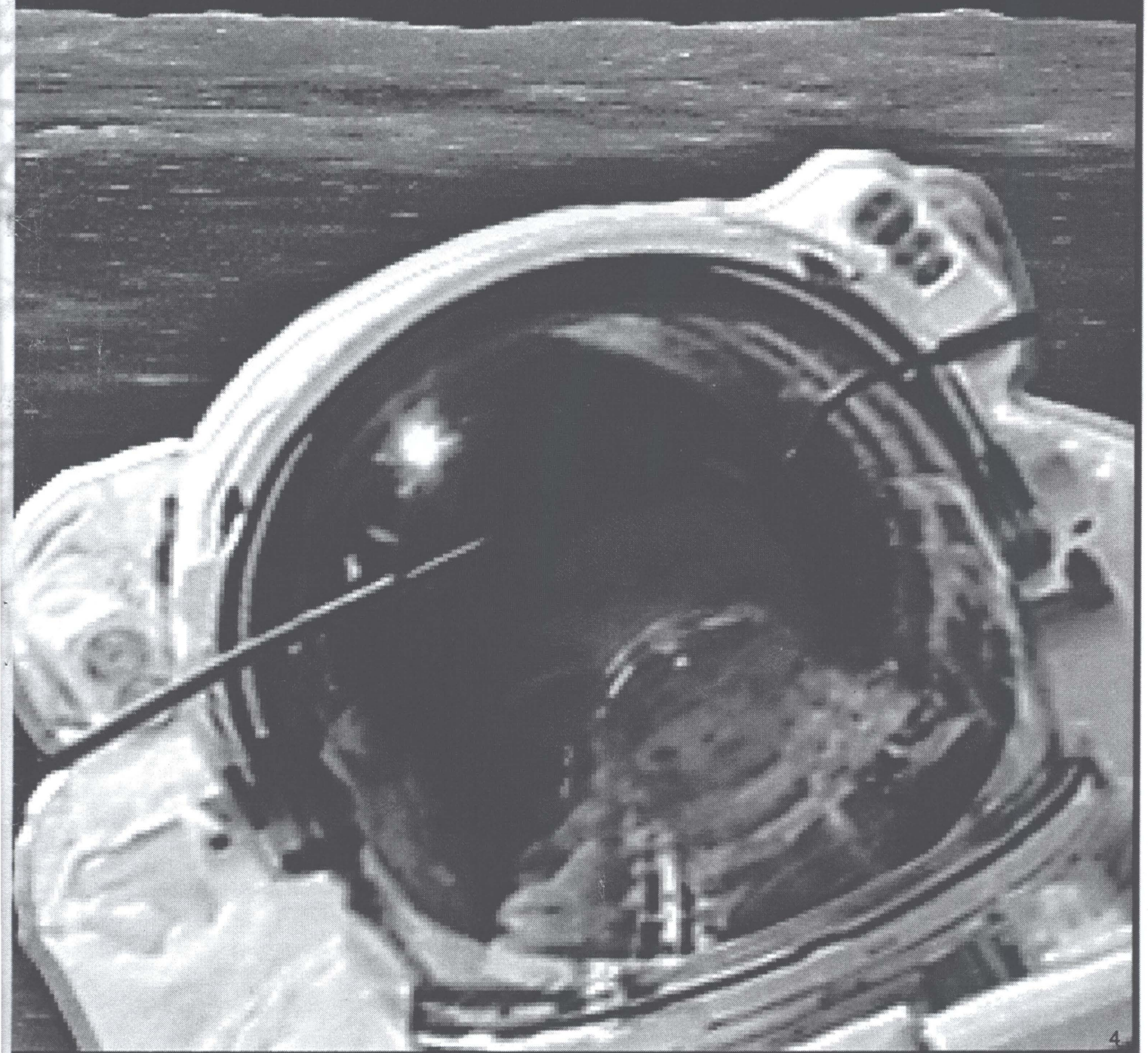
There was also unpublicised military fear that the opposition would develop new space capabilities which had to be matched or preferably surpassed.

As things turned out, these military concerns were largely unfounded and once the Moon had been reached, a number of unforeseen factors combined to slow the whole process of space exploration to its present rather sluggish pace.

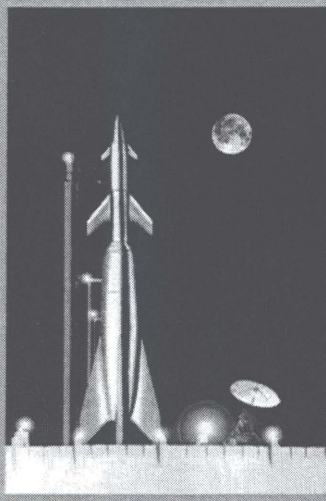
Nevertheless, a number of far-reaching space projects were considered by America and Russia that would have switched the course of history onto an entirely different track, had any been implemented. This article takes an alternative look at manned space exploration during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and examines those proposals, which remained secret until very recently.....



# DAYDREAMS ROSE

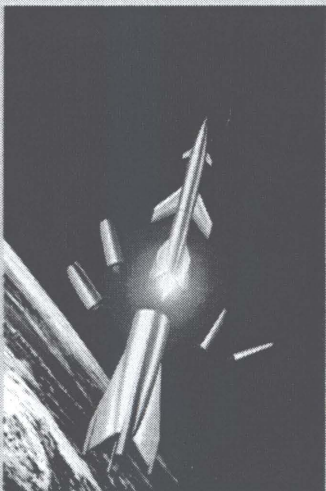




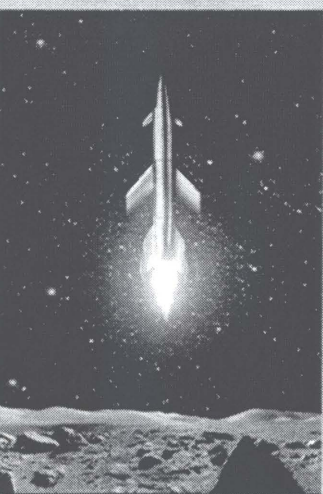


A 1950s concept of a multi-stage Moon rocket being prepared for launch.

Copyright Bill Rose.



The first stage of a huge Moon rocket falls away and the ship's atomic engine cuts in, propelling this fictional 1950s spaceship on its journey to the Moon.



The powerful atomic engine slows the decent of this 1950s Moonship as it prepares to make a historic touch down on the lunar surface in the early 1960s. The winged vehicle would return directly to Earth and make a conventional runway landing. Copyright Bill Rose.

## ONCE UPON A TIME

In his sensational 1865 novel "From the Earth to the Moon," Jules Verne described the launch of a manned space capsule from a giant cannon sited in Florida.

Influenced by Verne's stories, H.G Wells went on to write "The First Men in the Moon" published in 1901, which depicted a spaceship covered in a gravity repelling material called "Cavorite."

Both authors broke new ground and managed to move the topic away from total fantasy, even if their ideas lack scientific credibility when viewed from a present day standpoint.

However, it's worth bearing in mind that a Russian academic called Konstantin Tsiolkovsky had determined that rocket propulsion would work in a total vacuum by 1883 and established most of the ground rules for spaceflight before the turn of the century.

By the late 1920s, film makers were turning their attention to science fiction and the well-known director Fritz Lang chose to make a movie about a future manned flight to the Moon.

In an attempt to achieve scientific credibility, Lang hired rocket pioneers Willy Ley and Herman Oberth to act as technical consultants and the finished product "Frau im Mond" (Woman in the Moon) set the standard for cinematic productions until the

1950s.

Just before World War Two, a study group within the B.I.S (British Interplanetary Society) applied sound engineering principles to the design of a Moonship, producing plans not totally dissimilar to NASA's Apollo programme of the 1960s.

But there was no industrial base to support such a venture and no spare cash for an idea generally perceived as fairly pointless and probably unattainable within anyone's lifetime.

## POSTWAR PLANS

German Second World War "V" rockets were the true ancestors of all modern day launch vehicles and without them, a Moon mission and most of the advanced telecommunications we take for granted would still be decades away from realisation.

After WW11, Hitler's rocket scientists were recruited by America and Russia, who sought their expertise to develop the short range "V" missiles into fully fledged strategic weapons of mass destruction.

At the same time, several groups within the Pentagon started to consider the idea of using rockets for manned space missions and a hint of this thinking surfaced in the classic 1950 Hollywood movie "Destination Moon," directed by George Pal.

Scripted by the author Robert Heinlein, "Destination Moon" opens with a group of American scientists deciding that their country must be the first in space. One of the characters says, "If any other power gets into space before we do, we'll no longer be the United States, we'll be the disunited world."

With private funding, they construct a 150 ft long rocketship powered by an atomic engine and eventually, four astronauts set off to the Moon.

Five years later, George Pal produced the more ambitious movie "Conquest of Space," which told the story of a manned mission to Mars during the mid 1980s.

Based on Wernher von Braun's book "The Mars Project," this film contained some well thought out technical ideas, but was let down by a truly awful script.

"Conquest of Space" might be seen as just another Hollywood sci-fi movie, but it reflected US military thinking at that time and behind the scenes, von Braun was actively shaping the Pentagon's space aims which included orbital dominance by the early 1960s and a Moon landing before 1970.

Beyond that, military planners envisaged bases on Mars and Venus, which were seen as potentially habitable worlds. They also believed that the first nation with an arsenal of nuclear missiles on the Moon would exercise full control over the Earth. This idea was seriously flawed, but the Pentagon planned to secure the inner Solar System for the Union and felt confident it could be done if adequate funding was forthcoming.

So when Sputnik 1 was orbited by the USSR on October 4 1957, this brought the whole issue into sharp focus. A nation of peasants had put a small spacecraft into LEO, (Low Earth Orbit) while subtly demonstrating their future ability to deliver



a thermonuclear payload to any location on Earth.

As if confirming America's worst fears, an even bigger spacecraft called Sputnik 2 was placed in orbit on November 3 1957 and it contained a dog called Laika. Unfortunately, the launch of America's first Earth satellite was a dismal failure and after further mishaps with the US Navy's Vanguard rockets, Wernher von Braun's group took over and finally launched Juno 1 into orbit on January 31 1958.

However, it was now evident that the Soviets were moving towards a manned mission and if they managed to put a man into space and bring him back in one piece, the consequences for American prestige would be serious.

The USAF had been studying the idea of a manned space mission since 1952 under Project 7969 and the "Man in Space Soonest" programme.

This was finally passed to NASA who renamed it Project Mercury, although progress was relatively slow, with President Eisenhower showing little enthusiasm for civil space exploration.

Meanwhile, the US Army had secretly taken several big strides beyond Project Mercury, completing a very ambitious proposal called Project Horizon which aimed to seize the Moon for America.

### **FORTRESS LUNA**

Project Horizon was organised by Lieutenant General Arthur G. Trudeau, who headed the US Army's Research and Development Group.

In an official US Army document dated June 9 1959, Trudeau described the plan to establish a military lunar outpost as being, "of critical importance to the U.S. Army of the future." A view apparently shared by the Chief of Staff. At this stage of planning the funding requirements were clearly glossed over and played down, although the price of this scheme would have been breathtaking.

Trudeau went on to say, "the full extent of the military potential (of a Moon Base) cannot be predicted, but it is probable that observation of the earth and space vehicles from the Moon will prove to be highly advantageous. Military communications may be greatly improved by the use of a Moon-based relay station. The employment of Moon-based weapons systems against Earth or space targets may prove to be feasible and desirable. Moon-based military power will be a strong deterrent to war because of the extreme difficulty, from the enemy point of view, of eliminating our ability to retaliate." Trudeau added, "to be second to the Soviet Union in establishing an outpost on the Moon would be disastrous."

Although nobody had flown in space yet, the CIA were confidently predicting that the Soviets would land a man on the Moon by 1965.

East-West relations were already at rock bottom and US military planners were beginning to consider the possibility that future wars with the Communists might be fought in

space.

Unlike NASA's 1960s Moon programme, the military envisaged Project Horizon as a extremely rapid large scale operation which would rely entirely on the use of massive Saturn 1 and 11 boosters that were in development.

Under the Project Horizon proposal, the first Army astronauts would reach the Moon by April 1965 and secure "The Site" until the "Construction Crew" arrived.

During the second phase of Project Horizon, the operation would move into high gear and by November 1966, the US Army expected to have launched at least 150 Saturn rockets, transporting hundreds of tons of cargo to the lunar surface.

By December 1966, the (mostly buried) Moon base would be functional and by the end of 1967, it was estimated that 252 personnel would have flown up to LEO and some 42 would have travelled on to the Moon.

Weekly Saturn rocket flights would continue throughout this phase and to handle such a massive amount of traffic, new launch facilities were to be built in Brazil and on Christmas Island.

Proposed weapons systems for lunar deployment are not discussed within the available Project Horizon documents, but it is known that nuclear tipped missiles would have been stored in underground silos.

Had the Republican's won the 1960 Presidential Election, it is just conceivable the US Army might have received funding to proceed with (at least part of) Project Horizon.

However, once John F. Kennedy had been elected, the emphasis switched to the scientific exploration of space led by NASA.

Project Horizon was then filed away and would remain secret for another 40 years.

### **A NEW DIRECTION**

On October 1 1958, NACA (National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics) was enlarged and renamed NASA, (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) thus providing the US with a civil space programme.

Although the fledgling NASA had plans to put Americans in space and eventually reach the Moon, progress was initially slow and a change in the White House brought little in the way of extra funding.

But everything altered on April 12 1961 when Yuri Gagarin became the first man to make a spaceflight and this sensational Soviet success had a galvanising effect on the Kennedy administration.

A week after Russia's historic triumph, President



Kennedy sent a memo to Vice President Johnson, which said, "Do we have a chance of beating the Soviets by putting a laboratory in space, or by a trip around the Moon, or by a rocket to go to the Moon and back with a man. Is there any other space programme which promises dramatic results in which we could win?"

America's future in space was firmly back on the political agenda, and to NASA's great relief, they finally achieved a sub-orbital manned flight with a Mercury capsule on May 5, making Alan Shepard the first American to fly in space.

Later that month on May 25, at a Joint Session of Congress, President Kennedy said, "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to Earth."

Although NASA had been chosen to undertake a Moon programme and there were now billions of dollars on the table, the USAF had been busily working on their own scheme called Project Lunex (Lunar Expedition Program) under the direction of Major General J.R. Holzapple.

This complex study envisaged a circumlunar flight in September 1966 and a manned landing by August 1967. The USAF wanted a substantially more sophisticated space transport system than the Army or NASA and sought many billions of dollars to develop it.

They envisaged a new lifting body Spaceplane capable of making direct flights to the Moon in 2 ½ days, landing on the surface (with a special tail unit) and eventually flying back to Earth, where it would make a conventional runway landing.

A huge 3 stage booster was required to launch the Lunex Spaceplane and the USAF talked about using this monster rocket as the basic building block for later manned missions to Mars and Venus.

By January 1968, the USAF planned to have a permanently manned outpost on the Moon known as "The Facility." Relatively few details of this Base have come to light, but it would have been assembled from prefabricated modules that were buried beneath the lunar surface.

Superficially, Project Lunex appears to have been less militaristic than Project Horizon and the USAF's stated aim was to restore national prestige. Nevertheless, USAF Lunex documents hint at the deployment of weapons systems on the Moon and there are vague references to future Soviet threats.

Something like 70,000 personnel would have been needed for the Lunex scheme and one flight every two weeks was envisaged when space missions began.

Cape Canaveral was the favoured launch site, with The Corpus Christi Naval Air Complex being discussed as a secondary location.

Needless to say, Project Lunex was briefly studied by Kennedy's advisors, but it seems unlikely that the decision to use NASA for the Moon mission had ever really been in question. As a consequence, Project Lunex was filed away and forgotten about until late 1999.

NASA now decided to use the US Army's "von Braun" Saturn rocket (in preference to the broadly similar USAF booster) for their Moon landing programme.

The scale of NASA's plan was much smaller than Project Horizon, but it was still a truly massive endeavour, involving more than half a million Americans at its peak.

### RED MOON OVER MOSCOW

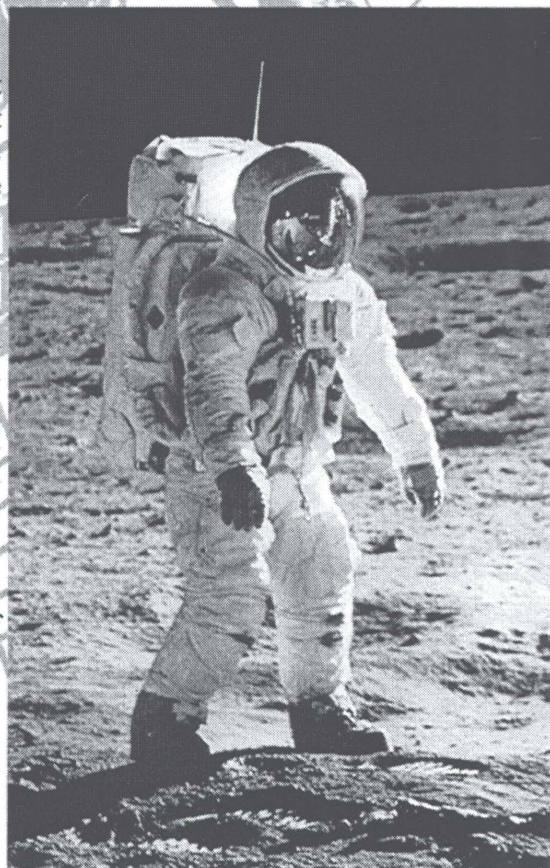
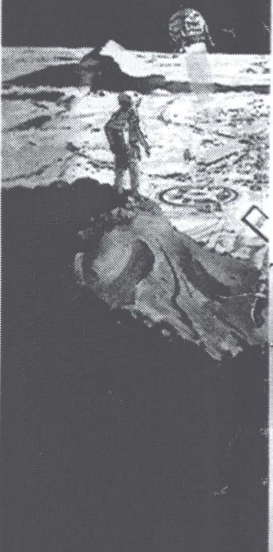
The Soviets were also working on an unpublicised Moon landing project, but the programme wasn't given full priority until Space Chief Sergei Korolev met directly with Khrushchev at the Kremlin on March 24 1964. Khrushchev then decided the Moon project should go ahead at full speed and approached the Central Committee for massive funding.

They dithered, but finally agreed that the Americans couldn't be allowed to get there first.

On August 3 1964, the Central Committee issued Command 655-268 which instructed Korolev to proceed with a full scale Moon project.

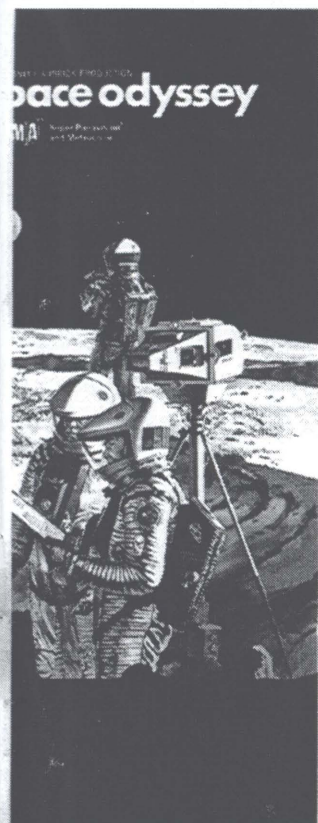
Subsequently, large sections of State Industry were mobilised,

2001:asp  
CINERA



Back illustration: The Soviet Union's Secret "LK" Lunar Module. Russia hoped to achieve a Moon landing with this craft before the Americans. Carrying a single cosmonaut, the craft shared many similarities with NASA's LEM. Bill Rose Collection.





**2001 A Space Odyssey** - The 1968 movie. Stanley Kubrick's stunning vision of the present day, based on a short story called "The Sentinel" by Arthur C. Clarke. Sadly, most of the big scientific developments shown in this film remain 50-100 years in the future.

although many Soviet officials felt that the promise of a manned landing by 1968 was unrealistic and it would be better to opt for a less demanding circumlunar mission which might be achieved by 1967.

However, the dream never materialised and a series of disasters put an end to Russia's Moon project, which was finally abandoned in the early 1970s and would remain unacknowledged until 1989.

### **BEYOND THE MOON**

By the time John Glenn became the first American to orbit the Earth on February 20 1962, NASA were working on their Moon project.

The early one-man Mercury capsule was due to be replaced by a more advanced two-man spacecraft called Gemini and there were unpublicised plans to develop this vehicle further for a rapid manned Moon landing mission.

Gemini's designer Jim Chamberlain (also responsible for Avro-Canada's highly advanced Arrow interceptor) hoped to trim a couple of years off NASA's target date, while saving part of the multi billion dollar budget allocated to development of the Apollo spacecraft.

Nevertheless, his proposal to use an enlarged Gemini spacecraft for a Moon landing was seen as too risky and NASA decided to stick with the three-man Apollo vehicle.

At the same time, NASA was drawing up plans to follow a successful series of Moon missions with something even more ambitious and there were three clear options.

The first was to build a large wheel shaped orbital space station although this wasn't considered very glamorous and the usefulness of such a facility was seen as rather questionable.

The second was to establish a small outpost on the Moon and the third was to undertake a manned mission to Mars. All three ideas have been the subject of ongoing studies since the formation of NASA, but back in the sixties, there was a real feeling in America that all these things could and would be achieved by the end of the century.

**Buzz Aldrin becomes the second human to set foot on the surface of the Moon. July 1969.**

Da a returned by the Mariner 2

probe in 1962 had shown that Venus was not the prehistoric swamp planet envisaged by science fiction writers or the waterworld suggested by Whipple and Menzel in 1954.

Earth's "twin" was suffering from a runaway greenhouse effect and conditions on its grim rocky surface were totally unsuitable for man or machine! Clearly, NASA and their Soviet counterparts would never be going there!

On the other hand, Mars remained a promising planet and seasonal changes to the surface hinted at the presence of vegetation. (Later determined to be caused by dust storms)

Although it was now accepted that no intelligent life existed on Mars and the canals were a myth, the Red Planet clearly possessed the most Earth like environment in the Solar System and NASA finally decided that a manned interplanetary mission was the obvious choice to follow Apollo.

While many unknown factors would need to be resolved, NASA believed they could achieve a manned landing on Mars by 1982.

So between 1961 and 1968, NASA issued approximately 60 Mars mission study contracts to aerospace companies.

A flight to the Moon and back seemed achievable with prevailing technology, but Mars was a significantly more demanding destination and would take NASA into totally new and largely uncharted territory.

To start with, a journey to the Red Planet lasting many months would require a Hohmann Transfer Orbit in a vehicle the size of a small space station, which was equipped with a high performance propulsion system.

In interplanetary space, the crew would be exposed to various types of radiation and a substantial shelter would be needed to cope with potentially lethal solar storms.

Then there was the question of zero gravity and its effects on the human body over prolonged periods, so ideally, the ship would have to be designed to counteract this problem, perhaps by using a rotating crew section.

Furthermore, a long duration mission in cramped conditions might create serious psychological

Back illustration: A 1970s proposal for a lunar transfer vehicle, which would ferry personnel and supplies between a large space platform in Earth orbit and the lunar surface. Copyright Bill Rose.



problems for the astronauts.

It was also possible that the crew might have to deal with serious emergencies and specialised secondary skills would be a very important part of personnel selection.

Mission control and smart computers could provide technical support, but the astronauts might be faced with life or death decisions that required immediate action and the Earth could be as much as 20 light minutes distant, ruling out immediate audio visual support.

A form of nuclear propulsion was considered the only realistic method of powering a Mars ship (by US and USSR scientists) and this probably remains the only choice for any near future manned mission to the Red Planet.

Surprisingly enough, an atomic drive was proposed by the American rocket pioneer Robert Goddard just before World War One and his ideas were further developed by Esnault-Pelterie during the early 1930s.

After WW11, when atomic power had become a reality, several leading US contractors began to study nuclear rocket engines with Douglas Aviation completing the first secret proposal in 1946.

By the late 1950s, Los Alamos scientists were ready to test their first experimental nuclear thermal rocket engine called KIWI at Jackass Flats in Nevada.

Reports were encouraging and during May 1961, President Kennedy took the advice of his scientific team and agreed to fund further development of a nuclear propulsion system for deep space missions.

NASA officials were generally unenthusiastic about using nuclear propulsion, but accepted it would be necessary for interplanetary flight, aware that nuclear technology promised two or three times the performance of any chemically fuelled rocket engine.

As a consequence, Westinghouse began work on NERVA, (Nuclear Engine for Rocket Vehicle Application) which was seen as critical to NASA's future Mars mission.

(NERVA was finally cancelled in 1972, but then secretly revived in 1983 for the S.D.I programme. Assigned the name Project Timberwind in 1987, this led to a new higher performance very compact nuclear engine with outstanding "ramp-up" power characteristics.

Timberwind was intended to propel a long range missile interceptor or for use with a new HLLV - Heavy Lift Launch Vehicle, designed to place laser weapon platforms in orbit. It was also suggested that Timberwind might be made available to NASA and calculations indicated that at least 60 days could be trimmed off a NERVA powered round trip to Mars)

NERVA (and Timberwind) used hydrogen for fuel, but another idea to be briefly aired in America was a nuclear pulse engine that worked on the seemingly bizarre principle of detonating low yield nuclear explosives behind a spacecraft which then pushed against a massive plate.

This idea was called Project Orion and it began in 1958 as a highly classified USAF programme undertaken by General Atomics in San Diego.

Orion had been conceived by former Los Alamos scientist Dr Theodore Taylor, who enlisted help from the highly respected physicist Freeman Dyson.

Project Orion promised astonishing levels of performance and small models powered by conventional explosives were successfully tested.

However, Kennedy's Defence Secretary Robert McNamara decided to cut back funding for Project Orion and NASA was less than enthusiastic about this form of nuclear propulsion which they considered "dirty technology," unsuitable for use within the Earth's atmosphere.

During 1961, Taylor and Dyson made several trips to the Marshall Space Flight Center and tried to convince NASA officials that it would be possible to mount a Mars mission by 1965 using Orion and perhaps a manned flight to Saturn's moon Titan by 1970.

With the enthusiastic support of Wernher von Braun, they suggested that a suitable craft could be assembled in LEO using no more than a couple of Saturn V launches and this would easily fly to the Moon and back to prove the concept. But NASA decided that Project Orion was a dangerous unexplored concept and they were going to stick with Apollo for the Moon landing, while continuing to develop NERVA for a possible Mars mission.

Then the August 1963 nuclear test ban was signed and NASA saw this as an endorsement of their decision to reject Project Orion. USAF funding was cut back further and finally terminated in late 1964.

## **SHOCKS TO THE SYSTEM**

When NASA's spacecraft Mariner 4 returned the first detailed images of the Martian surface in 1965, scientists around the world were shocked and disappointed to discover that the planet's cratered surface looked more like the Moon. The carbon dioxide atmosphere was found to be much thinner than expected and it was depressingly obvious that Mars was a cold, bleak, barren world.

Although a little dented, the American public's enthusiasm for space exploration remained high and there was still the very real possibility that Russia would reach the Moon first and go on to Mars.

Back illustration: After travelling for many months, the Mars ship glides down through the planet's thin carbon dioxide atmosphere. This early 1950s von Braun concept was portrayed in "Conquest of Space" and its huge wings would have been discarded after landing. On completion of the surface mission, the central section would return to Earth. Copyright Bill Rose.



Plans for a high profile US manned Mars flight continued to evolve, with the mission expected to start during November 1981.

Two nuclear powered Mars ships would be assembled in LEO, with the components being carried into space by a fleet of uprated Saturn HLLVs. There had been several suggestions to use massively stretched versions of the Saturn V rocket fitted with a NERVA third stage for a direct manned flight to Mars, but it was finally decided that new rockets known as Saturn V-25(S)U would be used to lift five separate nuclear engines into orbit for each interplanetary ship.

Launches would take place from Christmas Island and it's now clear that sections of Project Horizon were resurrected by NASA for this Mars mission proposal.

When the astronauts finally arrived at Mars, they would descend to the surface in a lander, which looked rather like a scaled-up Apollo capsule.

As a slightly less ambitious alternative to a surface landing, NASA also considered the idea of a manned mission to one of the Martian moons.

Mars possesses two very small satellites, Phobos (Fear) and Deimos (Terror) which were discovered by the American astronomer Asaph Hall in 1877.

At that time, little was known about these tiny worlds and there were some suggestions in the early 1960s that they might be artificial.

However, the Martian moons were eventually found to be heavily cratered bodies and both are undoubtedly captured asteroids.

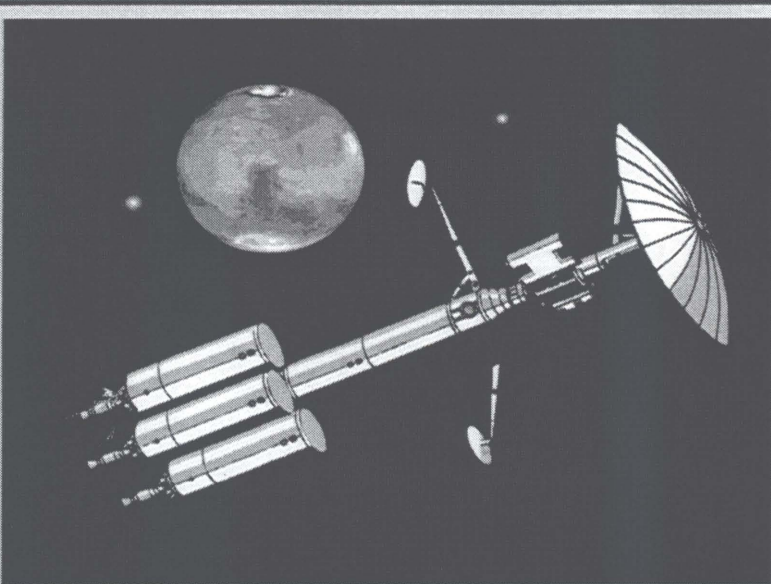
A mission to Phobos (the larger and more interesting choice) would be easier than a surface landing on Mars, but it seems this alternative was considered less likely to win public support and the proposal was finally dropped.

Following the assassination of President Kennedy in late 1963, the Government's commitment to space exploration noticeably altered and it became clear there was little enthusiasm to fund ultra expensive space projects which might take 15 or 20 years to realise.

Nevertheless, the Moon mission remained intact and there was talk of achieving a landing by 1968. Then on January 27 1967, a flight simulation was being run with Apollo I at Cape Kennedy and astronauts Virgil Grissom, Edward White and Roger Chaffee were fully suited inside the capsule.

Suddenly things went terribly wrong as a short circuit triggered an unstoppable electrical fire which swept through the spacecraft, fuelled by the pure oxygen atmosphere.

"We've got a bad fire!" Shouted Chaffee. "Let's get out, we're burning up!" These were the last chilling words to be spoken by any of the men who died in NASA's first disaster.



A nuclear powered Mars ship with aerobraking shield extended. This drawing is based on NASA's NERVA engined proposals created in the 1960s and the design continued to evolve over the following two decades. The crew quarters/lander are located well forward of the nuclear propulsion units and the modules can be extended from the centre body on cables and rotated slowly to create artificial gravity. Copyright Bill Rose.

The shockwave reverberated through the administration and the Moon project was set back months while reviews were conducted and changes made.

Then, the cost of the Vietnam War began to bite and President Johnson decided to trim back support for the Apollo programme, only allocating enough money for three Moon missions after Apollo 11. (Congress later overruled this)

### **BACK IN THE USSR**

Beginning in the late 1950s, Soviet scientists started to consider the idea of a manned landing on Mars or a fly-past of Mars and Venus.

By the early 1960s, it was decided that nuclear-ion propulsion was the preferred option for a interplanetary mission with nuclear thermal technology (similar to NERVA) as an alternative.

When America won the Moon race in 1969, Soviet attention switched to putting a man on Mars and a new secret Project was born called Aelita.

Using the N1 HLLV designed for the Moon mission, they planned to assemble a ship called MEK (Mars Expeditionary Complex) in LEO which would carry a crew of six to the Red Planet.

MEK was to be powered by nuclear-ion propulsion, supplemented by liquid fuel engines. The mission would have lasted approximately two years, with half the crew spending one month on the Martian surface.

The MPK (Mars Landing Craft) was designed to



use advanced aero braking and retro rockets to slow its descent to the surface and an enlarged Soyuz craft was expected to finally transport the triumphant crew back to Earth from LEO.

However, Russia's fourth huge N1 HLLV failed and despite excellent progress with the development of both nuclear propulsion options, there were technical setbacks in other areas and steadily rising costs.

Aelita then moved onto the back burner until 1986, when NPO Energiya revived and updated it, proposing the use of their new HLLV to launch components into LEO for one, or possibly two newly designed Mars ships which would be powered by clusters of nuclear thermal engines which were broadly similar to America's Timberwind design.

These Mars studies continued until the end of the decade, by which time, they had become little more than exercises, used to occupy the time of Russia's best scientists and there was no realistic likelihood of them ever being carried out.

#### **NEIL ARMSTRONG & ALL THAT!**

"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," said Neil Armstrong as he stepped off the LEM (Lunar Excursion Module) and dropped down onto the Moon's surface.

It was July 20 (In America) 1969 and a billion people around the World (including me) sat riveted to their television sets, proud to be witnessing such a stunning technical achievement and the birth of a new era.

Against the odds, American had beaten Russia to the Moon and the space age would become a Stanley Kubrick production after all.

Few Westerners outside the Pentagon were aware that the Soviets had also been preparing to land a man on the Moon. They had built a complex launch system using a colossal booster called N-1 which equalled America's Saturn rocket.

18 cosmonauts were secretly, trained for the Moon landing and at least four lunar descent vehicles designated LK (broadly similar to the US LEM) had been built.

After the LK had landed, one cosmonaut would have stepped onto the lunar surface and he would have remained there for about four hours.

If this and subsequent landings had been successful, the Soviets had drawn up extensive plans to establish a small lunar outpost by the mid-1970s.

Vladimir Barmin who headed the GSKB SpetsMash (State Union Design Bureau of Special Machine-Building) was assigned the task of

designing a Moon base and this received the project name Zvezda, or DLB. (Long Term Lunar Base)

Zvezda was to have been built from nine 4.5 m cylindrical modules, which would be assembled in trenches and buried to provide protection against radiation and micrometeorites.

Power would have been supplied by nuclear reactors, which were considered an absolute necessity during the long lunar nights (lasting 14.5 Earth days) when solar energy was not available.

Initially, nine personnel would have occupied the facility and it seems certain that an American base would have been constructed along very similar lines.

If and when a decision was made to expand the base, underground tunnels and chambers would be formed with special boring machines and nuclear explosives.

However, Korolev who was the real driving force behind Russia's space programme died during surgery on January 14 1966 and this would have profound consequences.

His death was followed by a dramatic series of major accidents (which remain mysterious) involving the N-1 boosters and soon, Russia's Moon Programme ground to a complete standstill.

Ultimately, all the Soviets were able to show for so much effort were a few small Moon rocks from a couple of sample retrieval missions conducted in the early 1970s and although brief follow-on studies took place, the Kremlin never showed any renewed desire to place men on the Moon.

U.S support for Moon missions began to decline with Apollo 12 and although the Apollo 13 accident drew millions back to their TV sets, interest rapidly faded after that.

By the early 1970s an American expedition to Mars was out of the question and the last three Apollo Moon missions (18, 19 and 20) were cancelled.

The public were disappointed with the whole issue. The Moon was a pretty boring place with about as much charm as a quarry after dark and no monoliths or other signs of aliens had been found.

Now that the Soviet Union had abandoned the idea of putting men on the Moon, the race was over and polls showed the American public were more concerned with other issues.

Too much money had been spent on Apollo and it was really a case of "been there, seen everything, done it."

It had taken 25 billion dollars of taxpayers money to reach the Moon and this was highlighted by the media, who would later forget to mention that the Vietnam War cost ten times as much and achieved absolutely nothing of any value.

The fact that the Moon programme had created a major revolution in microelectronics, global telecommunications, synthetic materials and a host of other technologies was never capitalised on by NASA.

In 1970, President Richard Nixon decided to accept the findings of the Space Task Group and he said, "With the



entire future and the entire universe before us, we should not try to do everything at once.

Our approach to space must continue to be bold, but it must also be balanced."

This "brakes on" message would set the tone for the following decades and NASA would never again enjoy the public support of the 1960s.

### **THE NEAR TERM FUTURE**

Although some would point to the Shuttle as NASA's next step forward from Apollo, it has been expensive to operate and plagued with serious problems. Furthermore, NASA had been unable to find enough tasks to justify its use, often conducting missions which have been perceived as little more than P.R. operations.

The Shuttle Orbiter is not the fully reusable two-stage vehicle which NASA aspired to and it was built to a budget with military payloads in mind.

NASA are currently engaged in construction of the ISS (International Space Station) which will cost the US taxpayer tens of billions of dollars.

Like the Shuttle, this design is a compromise and it has undergone endless revisions, while steadily rising in cost. It's purpose remains unclear and industry seems cool about its usefulness. Real science on the ISS seems limited and a manned outpost on the Moon would offer far more, especially in the areas of astronomy and physics.

Of course, ISS will continue to provide employment for thousands of aerospace workers and no doubt lead to many great P.R. opportunities.

Once this orbital platform has been completed, NASA will need to find an entirely new scheme to keep its staff and the aerospace contractors happy.

One option is to build a fleet of new spaceplanes, perhaps based on the Lockheed-Martin X-33 Venture Star, although there is no guarantee this will happen and it now seems likely that the life expectancy of existing Shuttles will be extended to 2030, with a series of progressive upgrades that include new reusable liquid fuel boosters.

A return to the Moon is still possible and it could

happen quite quickly, especially if a new HLLV was introduced or the Saturn rocket was revived in updated form.

The relatively recent (and very important) discovery of water ice at the Moon's polar regions could be just what's needed to prompt the construction of a small permanently manned base there.

Despite ongoing problems, a rolling programme of robotic Martian exploration will continue and it seems likely there will be samples returned from the planet's surface within the next 10 years.

While there have been predictions that this will lead directly to a manned mission, I do not personally expect to see images of American, European or Japanese astronauts standing on surface of Mars and waving flags around within my lifetime.

But I may be wrong and a Mars mission could be undertaken by the U.S. if there was adequate public support for such an endeavour. How much would it cost? Probably no more than American citizens spend in any given year on tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, gambling and handguns!

However, the "Cold War" is over and America has become the dominant world power. The Russians can barely sustain a manned space capability and the contest to become number one was settled ten years ago.

The dream of exploring space is still alive, but mankind's expansion into the Solar System is definitely on hold, at least for now.



## **Bill Rose**

Bill Rose has written articles for many technical magazines and journals, but is probably better known as a photojournalist. He has worked on photographic assignments around the world for various publishers and now runs his own business which specialises in P.R. photography.

He has a B.A. in Economics, completed some undergraduate studies in astronomy and he holds a recognised qualification in scientific photography. To date he has contributed to eight technical books and has illustrated several others. Bill's long term interests include astronomy, space flight, military aviation and UFO phenomena.





The

# UFOs in World War One?



# Scare in the air

by David Clarke Ph.D

*"...the first days of [the First World] war passed, and the Zeppelins did not come. Not the real ones, that is, though fear created their image in many places. Zepps had been definitely seen off the coast, over the Channel, shadowing ships at sea... Londoners watched the sky uneasily and lay at night waiting for the new terror of twentieth century war to come, snarling and roaring overhead..."*

**Kenneth Poolman,  
*Zeppelins over England.***



The study of UFO reports is a relatively new phenomenon. Today UFOlogy is by and large the province of enthusiastic amateurs who have little if any grounding in the social sciences. The vast majority of UFOlogists accept the raw

data at face value within the context of the predominant cultural mindset which interprets aerial phenomena in terms of alien or paranormal visitations. Few are aware, or would even acknowledge the role played by socio-cultural factors and perceptual psychology upon the form and content of the "testimony" which provides the raw material used by UFOlogists. Fewer still are aware of the historical precedents for rumour inspired panics even in the recent past which bear close comparison with the waves of media-inspired UFO reports

which have become such a feature of modern society.

Before the mid-20th century there were no UFOlogists to process and interpret reports of unusual objects in the sky. This allows us to examine what have been erroneously described in recent times as the first "UFO waves" of the late 19th and early 20th century without the distractions produced by the belief-systems imposed by contemporary commentators. The "phantom airship" sightings of this period were not UFO waves in the form we are familiar

with today, but rumour-inspired social panics. I believe that both were and are created and sustained by similar underlying human factors. During the Edwardian era speculation about life on Mars and other worlds was confined to the new fiction genre which

became known as sci-fi.

As a result novels such as H.G. Well's *War of the Worlds* (published in 1898) did not greatly influence the interpretation of aerial phenomena as science fiction would in the later "flying saucer" era.

In Britain during the six-year period beginning in 1908 there was a more immediate perceived threat in the form of the approaching war with Germany which would result in the slaughter of millions in the mud and trenches of Europe's battlefields. The decade which preceded the outbreak of the First World War had seen a great escalation of both diplomatic and military tension between the empires of Great Britain and Imperial Germany. This competition manifested itself in the form of the arms race and the rapid production of dreadnought warships.

From 1909 there was growing public concern about the threat of a German invasion of Britain and hysterical fears that a highly-organised and widespread spy ring was operating to prepare the ground for that invasion. Alongside the spy mania was the firmly held belief that the Germans were so advanced in the field of aviation that their Zeppelin airships were capable of visiting England; indeed many believed they had *already* done so secretly under cover of the night. Rumours tend to divide society into two camps composed of sceptics and believers, as we find today in

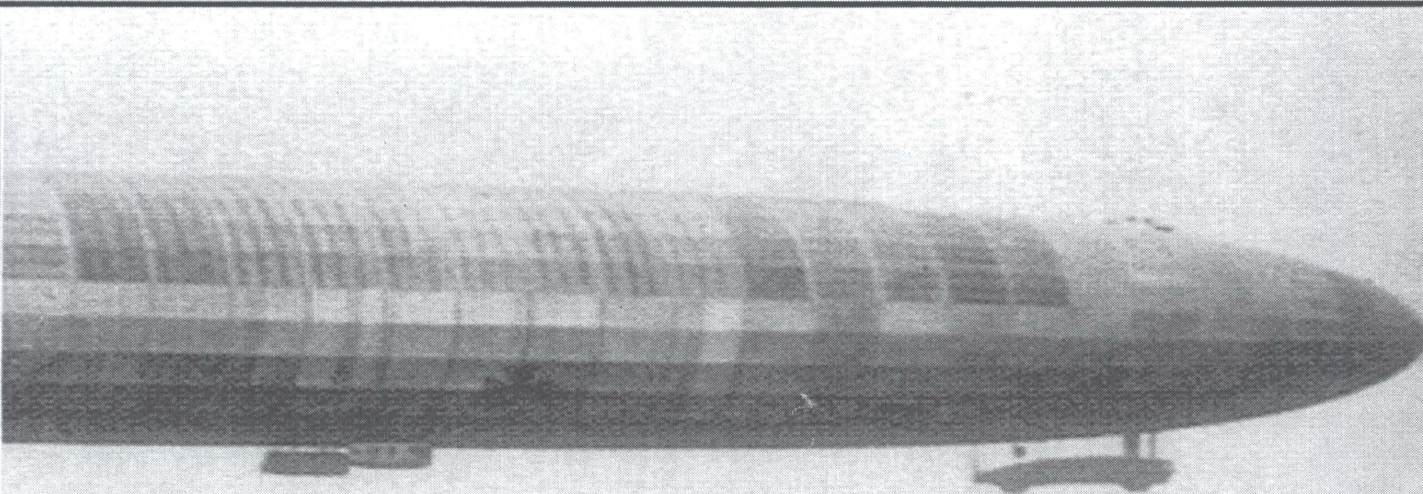
PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.—MAY 29, 1909.



AN EARLY SILLY SEASON.

THE SCARE: "WELL, IF THIS SORT OF THING KEEPS ON, IT'LL MEAN A DULL AUGUST FOR ME."





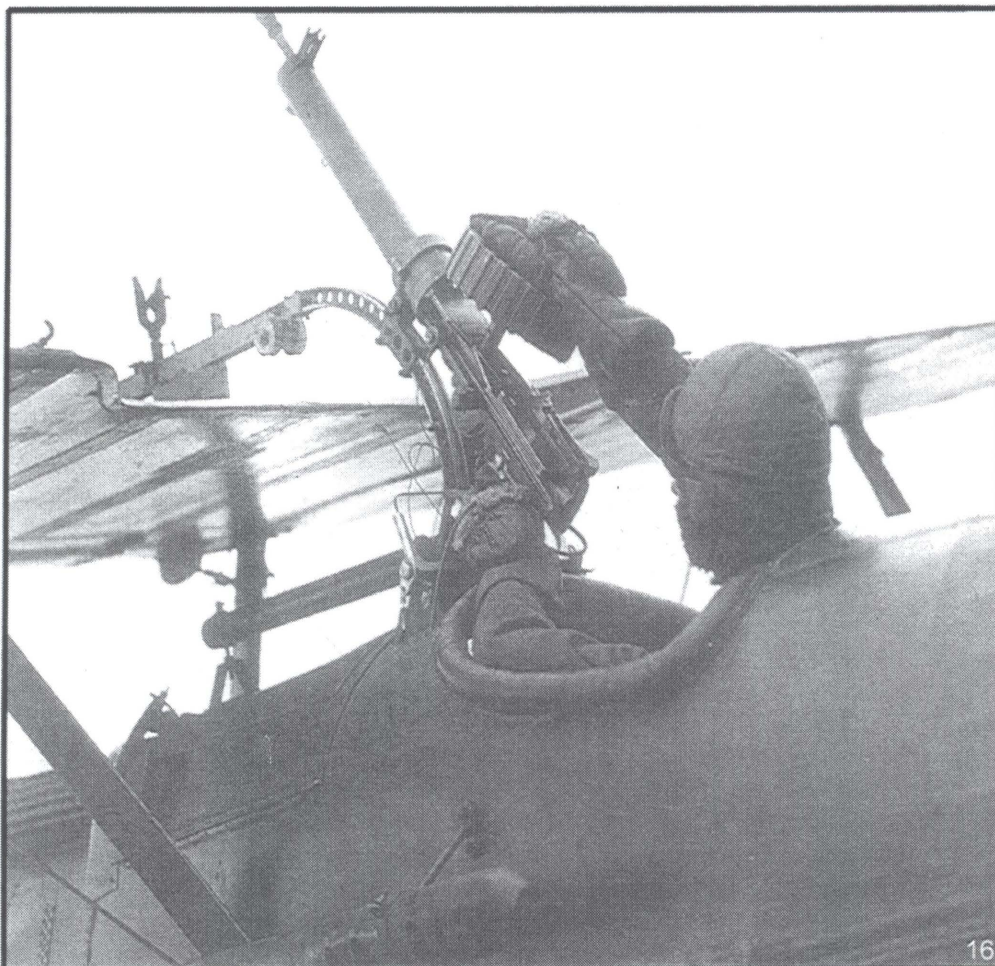
UFOlogy. The Zeppelin rumour was so ingrained upon the British psyche before the outbreak of World War One that "eyewitness testimony" - in many ways identical in its form and content to modern UFO reports - was often produced as "proof" in a fashion which appears all too familiar to us today.

As the panel "Aerial invaders and the origins of the British Secret Service" explains, these latent fears were encouraged by politicians and their friends in the Press at a period when the wireless telegraph was in its infancy. Newspapers and word-of-mouth were the primary source of public information in pre war Britain, and the rumours concerning Germany's intentions were easily manipulated by the state. Newspapers transmitted rumours which soon became rooted in popular belief, making it acceptable for patriotic citizens to report their "sightings" without fear of ridicule. In one specific incident, the claimed overflight of Sheerness Naval dockyard by a Zeppelin in 1912, there is good evidence to believe the initial rumour was concocted by politicians to warn the population of the coming war and the possibility of aerial bombardment which was expected. Those fears were not entirely without foundation, as by the Armistice of 1918 there had been 57 airship raids on Britain which killed 564 people and left thousands more injured and homeless; many hundreds more died in the raids by the first German heavy bombers on London and southeast England in the last two years of the war. Although these casualties have been overshadowed by the horrors of the Second World War, this was the first time in the world that a civilian population had been systematically terrorised by aerial bombing.

**The first airship raid** took place in East Anglia in January 1915, but such was the fear and expectation of attack from the air that reports of "phantom Zeppelins" poured into military headquarters from the first day that war was declared. From 1913 the image of the Zeppelin had become transformed into a "folk devil" comparable in terror to Napoleon's "invasion barges" which had alarmed an earlier generation. Upon the outbreak of the war persistent reports and rumours describing airships and airplanes flying secret night-time

missions began to reach the War Office, particularly from northwest England and the Scottish borders. On 7 August lights were put out in the important Vickers shipyard at Barrow in Cumbria when an airship was reported in the vicinity, and several soldiers opened fire at unidentified flying objects they believed were enemy aircraft in the tense days which followed the war declaration. At this stage the British public had been psychologically prepared for the arrival of the Zeppelins, either to take part in spying upon Britain's coastal defences or in attempts to bomb military targets and instil fear and panic into the civilian population. A frame of reference, comparable to the modern belief in alien visitors, was firmly established. Rumours became transformed into belief systems and soon "eyewitness" testimony appeared in support of these beliefs.

From the opening of hostilities, reports of unidentified aircraft and "floating lights" in the sky, which were





supposedly the work of spies signalling to the enemy, were received by military sources from various parts of the British Isles. The responsibility for investigating them fell upon two senior War Office officials, Lt Colonel W.S. Brancker the Assistant Director of Military Aeronautics and Lieutenant Colonel Vernon Kell of Military Observation Department Five. Kell was head of the Home division of the newly-formed Secret Service Bureau renamed MI5 in 1916. Brancker and Kell supplied each other with copies of incoming reports and decided which ones were worthy of further investigation. The extensive files preserved at the Public Record Office illustrate the close liaison between MI5 and the police which continues to exist today. From the outbreak of the war, Chief Constables were directed to report sightings of unidentified aircraft directly to "K" at MI5 who was worried about the growing numbers of the reports. On a number of occasions senior detectives and Intelligence officers were sent to interview witnesses who reported sightings of unidentified aircraft or moving lights in the sky.

On several occasions during August and September 1914 reports of nocturnal visits by airships to the northwest coast led Brancker and Kell to order wide scale searches of remote areas of northwest England and Scotland. Soldiers, yeomanry and boy scouts were ordered to search Lakeland fells and parts of the Lancashire Pennines because it was feared the Germans had established a secret landing strip for a Zeppelin somewhere in the mountains. On 16 August Lieutenant B.C. Hucks of the Royal Flying Corps flew a Bleriot II monoplane across the length of Pennine hills from Sheffield north to Penrith searching for the airship's "secret base." On 19 August he telegraphed to the War Office "...have searched the hills touching the following places - Lancaster, Sedburgh, Hawes, Askrigg, Brough and Appleby but with no results, am now at Penrith. Many reports reach the Chief Constable here of mysterious aircraft." Hucks left Penrith for Newcastle on 24 August and immediately the Chief Constable of Cumberland telegraphed to Brancker reporting "...an aircraft

seen from 9.30 to 12.45 last night east of Carlisle flashing red and white lights...11.45 another aircraft seen travelling very fast, came apparently near the first one from the south." Brancker wrote: "I cannot account for this. It seems unlikely that hostile aircraft would use lights." He wrote privately to the Chief Constable asking "who actually saw these aircraft and what reliance can be placed upon their reports."

Another telegram, from the Chief Constable of Lancashire, described a sighting of an aircraft carrying red and green lights and occasionally flashing a very brilliant searchlight which was both seen and heard above Ashton-under-Lyne as it flew towards Manchester on the night of 6 September. A War Office file report states bluntly: "...this was not one of our aircraft either naval or military. He [Brancker] cannot understand why lights should be shown unless for signalling to agents below...suggest someone be sent north to investigate closely these repeated reports from Lancashire."

At the same time Kell at MI5 had received reports from commanding officers both in Ireland and Scotland reporting "strong rumours" that hostile aircraft were operating from secret bases in the remote hills in Galloway and asking for searches of the suspected areas by the Royal Flying Corps. Kell wrote that "lights from an aircraft have been repeatedly reported at night in the neighbourhood of the First of Forth...[and] I am getting nightly reports from the Chief Constable of Lancashire that enemy airships are constantly being sighted between Liverpool, Manchester and Preston. This might be the same aircraft?" On 21 September Captain G.H. Cox of the Royal Flying Corps was ordered to investigate these rumours and visited Edinburgh, Dumfries and Liverpool before completing his mission. Unfortunately, the results are not known because his report cannot be found among the military intelligence records preserved at the public record office.

Further bizarre rumours appeared in 1915 at the time of the Zeppelin raid upon Norfolk on the night of 19 January. During the raid, the German airship L4 came over the coastline south of Mundesley at 7.55pm and set a course to attack King's Lynn while

its sister ship L3 crossed the coast five miles further south just after 8pm and bombed Great Yarmouth, killing two people and injuring others. During the night there were no raids by German aeroplanes which did not have sufficient range to reach the Norfolk coastline, and no British aircraft were airborne from the Royal Naval Air Service base at Yarmouth. However, coastguards claimed they saw four Zeppelins cross the coast, while fishermen put the number at six. In Yarmouth itself, police and other witnesses swore the raiders were aeroplanes and one report asserted "...the night was fairly clear and the outlines of the machines were visible; two of them came in from the direction of the sea and dropped four bombs...at 11.45 another came over the

## WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

In 1952 Prime Minister Winston Churchill penned the now well-known personal minute to the Secretary of State for Air and his scientific advisor, Lord Cherwell

*'What does all this stuff about flying saucers amount to? What can it mean? What is the truth?'*

he asked in genuine puzzlement following a dramatic wave of UFO sightings across America which set alarm bells ringing in Washington DC. **Forty years before** this memo was written Churchill, as First Sea Lord in the Liberal administration of Prime Minister Herbert Asquith had become the first minister of state to be quizzed in Parliament concerning a sighting of an "unidentified flying object."





town from inland. It was flying very fast and disappeared over the sea without dropping any bombs."

Even more bizarre was the story sent to *The Times* by the King's Lynn MP Mr Holcombe-Ingleby which claimed the raiding Zeppelins had been accompanied by two mysterious motorcars which used searchlights to help them locate targets. The occupants of these cars "occasionally sent upwards double flashes and on one occasion these flashes lit up a church on which the Zeppelin attempted to drop a bomb." The MP went further, claiming that in King's Lynn itself the course of the Zeppelin was shadowed by "a car with powerful lights" which at one point were directed upon the town's Grammar School. "The car then stopped in the town and attention was called to the lights as a breach of the regulations," he asserted. "Having put them out, the driver turned his car quickly round and made off at a rapid pace for the open country."

Investigations later showed these "eyewitness reports" had no basis in reality. An official War Office history of the raid completed in June 1918 found no evidence to support the popular belief that cars were used to help the Zeppelins to navigate. "There were a good

many reports of signalling to the enemy from motorcars during this raid, as also during other raids during 1915," it concluded. "They do not, however, seem to have been substantiated." Further phantom air-raids were reported in February 1916 when lights in railway stations and munitions factories were extinguished after false reports that Zeppelins were attacking Britain spread like wildfire through the population. Although the real raids when they came were small in comparison with bombing during the Second World War, they brought panic and great concern at the highest levels of Government which led directly to the creation of the RAF as an efficient defence against aerial attack.

Dealing with reports of "phantom aircraft" were an additional duty for MI5's staff which wasted manpower and added to the burden of providing an effective defence for the exposed British coastline. The surviving records from this period make it clear that the Directorate of Military Intelligence, as it became known in 1916,

concluded the vast majority of the reported sightings of unidentified aircraft and moving lights in the sky were "false" and had been generated by rumour alone. In May 1916 the General Headquarters of the Home Forces issued a confidential Intelligence Briefing which summarised the findings of its investigations into reports of enemy signalling activity which was widespread throughout the first two years of the war. Under the section "moving lights in the air" the report says phenomena such as these "are often difficult to explain satisfactorily" but notes that the planets and very bright stars, searchlights and optical illusions all played a role in creating them. It added that "at least in one case there are grounds for believing that these lights have been based on hitherto improperly observed phenomena of marsh gas or 'ignis fatuus.'"

The circular concluded that "there is no evidence on which to base a suspicion that this class of enemy activity ever existed" and states that the percentage of cases satisfactorily cleared up was 89 percent. This is a figure which bears close comparison with the percentage of contemporary UFO reports which have been categorised as "explained" in mundane terms today, and suggests that similar factors are at work in both contexts. Military intelligence identified the important role of rumour in the transmission of false reports of air raids and enemy signalling activity and the dangers this posed for the effective defence of the country in time of war. Newspapers were the main medium for rumour transmission, and action was quickly taken to severely restrict what journalists were allowed to publish concerning air-raids after 1916. By the end of the war, censorship was so strict

£1,000      THE DAILY GRAPHIC, JANUARY 21, 1915      LONDON EDITION

THIS ISSUE OF THE "DAILY GRAPHIC" CARRIES A FREE INSURANCE OF £1,000 UNDERTAKEN BY THE OCEAN ACCIDENT & GUARANTEE CORPORATION, Ltd. (Incorporated in England)

ZEPPELINS OR TAUBES? EVIDENCE FROM EAST ANGLIA.

TYPES OF GERMAN AIRCRAFT: A ZEPPELIN AIRSHIP, AND SOME OF GERMANY'S LATEST AEROPLANES.

HOUSES IN ALBERT STREET, KING'S LYNN, WRECKED BY THE GERMAN AIRMEN.      A BOMB FOUND AT YARMOUTH.

Five people have been killed and six injured as the result of the German air raid on the Norfolk coast—a teacher, a shoemaker, and a woman of seventy-two were killed at Yarmouth; the young widow of a soldier who died at the front, and a youth of seventeen at King's Lynn. The Yarmouth police are confirming that the raiders came in formation; the people of

at Yarmouth and King's Lynn are equally positive that they saw nothing, and the photographs of the unexploded bomb on this page rather supports their opinion. This bomb weighs 600lb., and is far larger than the explosives carried by aeroplanes. Pictures of the houses at Yarmouth and King's Lynn appear on pages 4 and 5.



that newspapers were not even allowed to publish the name of cities and towns which had suffered damage as a result of Zeppelin raids. In March 1916 the General Headquarters of the War Office went further, issuing an order attacking "the groundless rumours regarding the presence of hostile airships over Great Britain (which) have of late become very frequent." It imposed severe measures to combat "irresponsible" people who it said were helping to spread disruptive rumours, ordering that "persons originating such reports or assisting to circulate the same should be dealt with under the Defence of the Realm Regulations." It is not surprising that the official records contain few reports of "phantom" airships after this order was implemented.

#### Phantom Zeppelin Raids

One report of an early visit by a Zeppelin to the British coast during the first months of the First World War was taken seriously by the British authorities. It appears in the official British forces War History published in 1925. This report resulted in the War Office sending an intelligence officer, Captain Stansfield, to take statements from the skipper and crew of the Hull trawler *SS Ape*. Ship's master G.F. Hiles told Stansfield how the ship was sailing towards Yarmouth at 4.10pm on 15 December 1914 when just south of the Protector Shoal Buoy the crew sighted "a black object astern which gradually drew nearer." Although the sky was overcast and hazy, it soon became clear the object was an airship as it slowly approached the ship at a height of 500 to 600 feet. "She soon turned and headed in towards land, rising as she did so," Stansfield wrote in his official report to the Imperial General Staff. "A car was then observed underneath amidsthips...as she rose speed increased and she was gradually lost sight of in haze and increasing darkness." The skipper was prepared to take an oath this was a Zeppelin and thought "he could hear a buzzing noise" as the large craft disappeared towards Mablethorpe on the Lincolnshire coast.

Stansfield concluded his report by stating: "The Master gave his evidence in an exceedingly clear and truthful manner and I can suggest no reason why his evidence should be doubted." This sighting was judged to be good evidence for a visit by a Zeppelin to the East Coast defences immediately prior to the bombardment of Scarborough, Hartlepool and Whitby by German battle cruisers which took place on the morning of 16 December. Major James of Military Training appended a note to Stansfield's report which reads: "Mark up the paper on the attack on Hartlepool and note in that paper this evidence of an air reconnaissance before the attack." However, after the end of the war it became clear that a German airship could not have been responsible for this sighting. Zeppelin war diaries examined by historian Douglas Robinson show that weather conditions were so atrocious on December 15 that none of the airships were even able to make local practice flights from their sheds in Northern Germany. Records kept by the British war office showed a barometer reading of 29.15 inches for the time of the sighting and no flight over the sea was conducted under such inclement conditions throughout the war. Was this report the product of a rumour or did a "phantom airship" visit the Humber Estuary just hours before German battlecruisers launched their surprise attack on the East Coast of Yorkshire?

Equally as puzzling are the reports of strange lights

observed by members of the Royal Flying Corps charged with the defence of London from Zeppelin raiders. On the night of January 31, 1916 orders were sent to the fighter aerodromes warning that enemy airships were expected to attack the capital. Nine Zeppelins of the German Navy had left their sheds on the Continent with orders to bomb central England in weather conditions of freezing rain, snow and thick ground mist. Amidst much confusion targets in the North and Midlands including Burton-upon-Trent, Scunthorpe and Birmingham were attacked and bombed, but none of the raiding airships reached London or the Home Counties. Reports that one of the Zeppelins had initially turned south on crossing the East Anglian coast led the War Office to calculate its course, if held, would take it over north London around 8.10pm. Orders to this effect were sent to the fighter squadrons of the Royal Flying Corps, one of these being Hainault Farm, four miles north of Romford in Essex.

At 7.40pm Lieutenant R.S. Maxwell arose from here in his BE2C biplane No 2087 but saw nothing unusual until 8.25 when according to his report "my engine was missing irregularly and it was only by keeping the speed of the machine down to 50 mph that I was able to stay at 10,000 feet. It was at this time when I distinctly saw an artificial light to the north of me, and at about the same height. I followed this light northeast for nearly 20 minutes, but it seemed to go slightly higher and just as quickly as myself, and eventually I lost it completely in the clouds."

Some 20 miles east of Hainault Farm was another of London's fighter aerodromes at Rochford, Essex. It was from here at 8.45pm that Flight Sub-Lieutenant J.E. Morgan arose for a patrol in his machine. He reported that when at 5,000 feet he saw a little above his own altitude and slightly ahead to his right, about 100 feet away from his plane, what he described as "a row of what appeared to be lighted windows which looked something like a railway carriage with the blinds drawn." Believing that he had come across a hostile Zeppelin about to bomb London, Morgan drew his Webley Scott pistol and fired it in the direction of the "railway carriage", whereupon "the lights alongside rose rapidly" and disappeared into the inky blackness!

A full account of Morgan's sighting, dubbed "an encounter with a phantom airship" appears in Captain Joseph Morris's official history of the German air raids, published in 1925. The book was compiled from then classified Air Ministry records, and Morris refers directly to the airman's report filed with the War Office. However, extensive searches of the Air Ministry records at the Public Record Office have failed to locate Morgan's original report although the station log from Rochford aerodrome gives brief details of the flight with the addition of the word "ZEPP" which shows he did have an encounter with something he took to be an enemy airship. Morgan's report is not included in the official account of the 31 January 1916 raid published at the end of the war, so it appears no credence was attached to it by the authorities.

Morgan was not, however, the only British airman to report a mid-air encounter with an unidentified flying object during the defence of the country from air raids. On 6 September 1914 Flight Commander C.E.H. Rathborne of the Felixstowe Naval Air Station, Suffolk, returned from an early morning patrol in his RNAS seaplane to report an encounter with another "phantom airship." His report, preserved in the station log, reads: "At 5.35 am whilst on patrol half way between the Sunk and Shipwash lightships, I sighted an airship, with a silver coloured envelope on the horizon. I was flying at 1,300 feet at the time. I at once started to follow her, and did so for about ten miles, when she disappeared into the haze, and I was unable to pick her up again. The estimated position of the airship is from 25 to 30 miles south of Orfordness. The airship



appeared to be steering south-south-east. Owing to the haze and distance it was impossible to distinguish any details, such as cars. The shape appeared to be similar to the Astra Torres [semi-rigid German Army airship], and the sun showed up the silver colour of the envelope clearly."

Despite the hype which the Zeppelin fleet received in the popular Press prior to the outbreak of the war, its actual strength would have surprised even the most knowledgeable military intelligence sources. For the facts were that Germany had just one Naval Zeppelin and five Army airships in service when the First World War was declared. Within the first few months of hostilities most of the Army ships had been destroyed or wrecked following action over the battlefield, leaving no aircraft free for the raids against England demanded by the German High Command. It is clear that whatever Flight Commander Rathborne saw over the Suffolk coast, it was not a German airship. His report, and that of the two Royal Flying Corps airmen in 1916, are the first mid-air encounters with unidentified flying objects reported by military fliers.

### How Rumours Begin

An understanding of how rumours were spread during the First World War is essential before the phantom Zeppelin sightings can be fully understood and properly interpreted. Belief in visits by German airships was in fact just one of a series of overlapping rumours and panics which spread like wildfire through Britain and the other countries caught up in the mushrooming armed conflict between 1914 and 1918. For example there was a rumour which began late in August 1914 of a Russian army being shipped from Archangel to northern Scotland, with the soldiers being transported in great secrecy hidden inside covered railway carriages through England to the south coast and from there shipped to fight against the German army in Belgium. Although it was "just a rumour" many eyewitnesses came forward to claim they had seen the railway carriages containing the Russians, some of whom still had "snow on their boots". Indeed, a Mr Champion even claimed to have travelled from Archangel with 2,500 Cossacks and was able to take photographs of them. There is enough "eyewitness" evidence of this mythical event to construct a conspiracy theory which claims that a Government cover-up of the facts exists to this day. There is in fact sufficient eyewitness testimony for this to be used as "proof" that Russian soldiers fought alongside the British Expeditionary Force on the Western Front in 1914 and that a conspiracy of silence has existed ever since.

More accurately, the "Russians in England" rumour demonstrates how we cannot rely upon the statements of those who claim to have observed incidents where they are rumour-inspired. Similar psychological motivations lay behind the stories of "eyewitnesses" who have come forward in recent years claiming they were present when alien bodies were removed from the Roswell UFO "crash" were examined in Air Force hangars. Sociologists define rumours as "a recurrent form of communication through which people caught together in an ambiguous situation attempt to construct a meaningful interpretation of it by pooling their intellectual resources." In time of war, information is in short supply and rumours rapidly become beliefs which are acted upon. The lack of any co-ordinated Government censorship of the Press in the first few months of the First World War encouraged the spread of stories such as those concerning the Russian troops, the Zeppelin sightings and the almost continuous claims of flashing signal lights supposedly employed by German spies. To give some idea of the extent of these rumours, a Military Intelligence report from 1916 estimated the total number of reports of "enemy signalling" to be as high as 2,000 from the Scottish command alone during the first year of the war.

In August 1914 off the East Coast of Yorkshire and again in April

1915 in Norwegian waters rumours spread of a battle between British and German warships. Flashes in the sky and explosions reputedly caused by gunfire were reported by the crews of a number of ships from neutral countries. Once again these rumours produced eyewitness testimony of events which did not take place. The most dramatic of these came from the captain of the Danish steamer *Hilda Maersk* who claimed on arrival at Hull that when 15 miles off Spurn Head he had distinctly seen a number of ship's masts rising out of the water at the mouth of the Humber estuary. Six of these were visibly flying the German flag, from which he was able to conclude they were the remains of German warships sunk in a battle with British cruisers. His account was confirmed by the steamer's first officer. Unfortunately, the naval historical records from this period demonstrate there had been no naval battle in the North Sea and therefore no sunken warships, German or otherwise!

Possibly the best known rumour of the First World War period was the story of the Angel of Mons. The Battle of Mons on 23 August 1914 was the first engagement of the war between British and German forces and historian A.J. P. Taylor notes it was the only one where "supernatural intervention was observed, more or less reliably, on the British side." This intervention took a number of forms, from a mysterious cloud which appeared between the BEF and the German cavalry as the former were in danger of annihilation, to claims that ghostly archers had felled German soldiers with supernatural arrows. Later, visions of angels were spoken of which placed themselves between the opposing forces, allowing the outnumbered British soldiers time to retreat while German horses and soldiers fled in terror. Those who investigated the Mons mystery could never find a single reliable eyewitness account from veterans of the battle itself that was not third-hand or unreliable. The origin of the rumour was traced to a work of fiction called *The Bowmen* by Arthur Machen which was first published in the London *Evening News* in September 1914. Not one single account of the Mons battle which appeared prior to Machen's story contains any reference to angels and supposed witnesses only began to come forward during the summer of 1915 after the rumours about the angelic visitation had become firmly rooted in popular belief and consciousness.

UFO historian Granville Oldroyd has concluded that socio-psychological explanations can explain all the different categories of rumour which surfaced in British society during the First World War period. In the case of the phantom airships and enemy signalling, there are clear similarities with contemporary UFOs in that both reports came in waves, were largely nocturnal and the percentage of "unknowns" were roughly the same. Belief in the existence of German signalling continued throughout the course of the war because the rumour had become self-perpetuating. The Zeppelin scares and the stories concerning the Russians, the phantom naval battles and the Angel of Mons all produced eyewitness accounts of events which did not take place. Although all four were "one-off" belief systems specific to a certain time and place, a study of how they began can help us better understand today's all pervading UFO mythology. Granville writes that: "The World War One belief systems were created entirely by ourselves so we are quite capable of creating the UFO belief, except that this one has become self-perpetuating



with its own subject imagery."

These conclusions are shared by sociologists such as Robert E. Bartholomew and Phillis Fox who have both discussed the role of belief systems in the creation of UFO reports. Dr Fox described the process by which people decide an ambiguous object in the sky is a UFO or spaceship is a type of collective human behaviour "similar to the transmission of rumour." She concluded that human beings do not observe events in the way that a camera does. "To a considerable extent, people see what they expect to see; and what they expect to see is not simply a result of their personalities but also of their social and cultural milieu."

## AERIAL INVADERS AND THE ORIGIN OF THE BRITISH SECRET SERVICE

1909 saw the founding of the Secret Service Bureau in direct response to the growing fear that the German armed forces were planning an invasion of England. In March that year the Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, instructed the Committee of Imperial Defence to investigate the dangers posed by German espionage to British naval ports. It concluded that "an extensive system of German espionage exists in this country, and we have no organisation for keeping in touch with that espionage and for accurately determining its extent and objectives." In October, 1909, as a direct result of the Committee's recommendations Captain Vernon Kell of the South Staffordshire Regiment and Captain Mansfield Cumming of the Royal Navy jointly set up the new military intelligence services. Cumming became known as "C" and was responsible for gathering overseas intelligence while Kell, responsible for counter-espionage on the British mainland, was known as "K". These code-names were the basis for Ian Fleming's MI6 chief "M" who features in the James Bond novels and films.

Kell's branch of the Secret Service was originally known as Military Observation Five or MO5. At the outbreak of the First World War MO5 had a small office in Central London and a staff of ten including civilians, army officers and police detectives who worked closely with Special Branch. The demands of the war brought a dramatic increase in the branch's workload and by 1916 MI5, as it was then known, became part of the new Directorate of Military Intelligence. By the end of the war MI5 had a staff of almost 900 agents. These early records of the activities of MI5 were deemed so sensitive by successive Governments that they remained security classified for almost a century. They were not released to the public record office until November 1997.

MI5's role during the period 1909-1919 was primarily counter-espionage against the perceived threat from German spies. Throughout 1909 many English newspapers published a string of hysterical scare stories describing the alleged activities of German agents, the East Coast being a favourite focus of many alarms lying as it did at a strategic position from the viewpoint of an invasion force. One newspaper claimed the German army would want to land half a million soldiers in the Humber Estuary as part of their invasion plan. Others claimed there were thousands of German spies living secretly in 21 London disguised as waiters and horse-peddlers. The

spy scare was whipped up by professional scaremongers such as Erskine Childers (author of *The Riddle of the Sands*) and their friends in Parliament and the Press. As a result the most unlikely stories and rumours about Germany's network of agents were widely believed, often by Intelligence officers themselves. MI5's records make it clear that the estimated number and capabilities of Germany's spies had been vastly exaggerated. By the end of the First World War Kell's detectives had arrested 35 enemy agents which effectively paralysed the German secret service in Britain.

Despite the widespread fear of a German invasion plot the British Navy's continuing strength meant the British Government never had



## M.I.5's CHRISTMAS CARD-1918

to seriously consider the possibility of an invasion from the sea. There was, however, one field in which Germany had the upper hand - aviation. The pivotal year of 1909 brought the first crossing of the English Channel by the French airman Louis Bleriot in his flimsy monoplane; it also brought a new and insidious threat from the Continent. Germany's investment in the development of the Zeppelin airships by now threatened to breach the sea barrier which



had hitherto protected the British Isles from invasion by sea. The success of the Zeppelins brought with it the real prospect that aerial warfare could be brought behind the front lines and reduce the civilian population to a state of terror, an image of horror brought graphically to life by H.G. Wells in his 1908 novel *The War in the Air*. This perceived threat was made all the worse by the lack of any suitable British aircraft or anti-airship defences to combat Germany's aerial battleships.

Fear of Germany's growing aerial fleet triggered the "airship scare" which gripped Britain between March and May 1909. The panic was worked up by the proprietors of the *Daily Express* and London *Evening News* which printed lists of the towns and villages in East Anglia which the Zeppelin had visited by night. While many of these sightings were clearly hoaxes, several dozen ordinary people signed statements to the effect that they had seen a mysterious torpedo-shaped object moving swiftly through the night sky. Many claimed to have seen lights, others a dazzling searchlight beam and a whirring noise as if from the engines of the phantom airship. In May the numbers of sightings dramatically increased as the scare spread to South Wales, Ireland and northern England. Rumours spread that the Zeppelin was being launched from a German steamer anchored in the Bristol Channel. Several people claimed they had seen the crew of the airship or heard them talking in "guttural voices" from above. Two men claimed they had spoken to the occupants after the craft touched down on Ham Common in central London late on night; they described two men who controlled the aircraft as "a German gentleman" and "a Yankee." Probably the best known story was that of Cardiff showman Charles Lethbridge who claimed he had surprised the crew of the landed airship late one night high on Caerphilly Mountain. The two "foreigners" busily working on the craft were dressed in "heavy fur coats and caps" and jabbered away in a strange lingo when they saw him. Evidently unhappy at being discovered on their spying mission, the pair jumped into a carriage suspended below the airship which lifted off the ground and flew away towards Cardiff.

Towards the end of the scare many of the "airship" sightings were exposed as hoaxes or the handiwork of jokers and enterprising advertisers who sent aloft lighted box-kites and fire balloons deliberately to fool nervous skywatchers. Aviators pointed out that no German airship could have crossed the English Channel and returned under cover of darkness without being spotted or falling foul of the unpredictable weather. Although three existing prototype Zeppelins were technically capable of such visit, they were highly unstable and their hydrogen-filled gasbags fatally vulnerable to accidents. A spying mission was fraught with danger and any "incident" would have amounted to an act of war. Furthermore, airships never flew by night at this stage and the existing technology could not replicate the speed and manoeuvres reported by those who claimed to have seen the phantom Zeppelins. One newspaper pointed out that to be seen at 11pm near Stamford, Lincolnshire and then be over Southend in Essex twenty minutes later, as was reported on 9 May 1909, the "phantom airship" would have to have achieved a speed of 210 miles per hour as the two places were seventy miles apart. By contrast, the most advanced Zeppelin in the German Navy's fleet, the LZ 7 *Deutschland*, had a top speed of just 37 miles per hour! A journalist working for *The Observer* newspaper contacted Count Zeppelin directly for his view on the "airship scare." The response, in a telegram from Friedrichshafen, said simply: "I don't believe in ghosts."

## THE SHEERNESS MYSTERY

In 1952 Prime Minister Winston Churchill penned the now well-known personal minute to the Secretary of State for Air and his

scientific advisor, Lord Cherwell. 'What does all this stuff about flying saucers amount to? What can it mean? What is the truth?' he asked in genuine puzzlement following a dramatic wave of UFO sightings across America which set alarm bells ringing in Washington DC. Forty years before this memo was written Churchill, as First Sea Lord in the Liberal administration of Prime Minister Herbert Asquith had become the first minister of state to be quizzed in Parliament concerning a sighting of an "unidentified flying object." Of course the question in 1912 did not relate to an extraterrestrial UFO, but in this case an alleged intrusion from a more familiar "alien nation." Before the First World War, any mysterious light or aerial object sighted in the sky over Britain was suspected as a German Zeppelin airship or the work of a German spy signalling to ships or aircraft. Between 1912 and 1952 great changes had taken place in the social and psychological make-up of British society. The country had participated in two devastating World Wars and by the 1950s fears of German invasion had given way to the Cold War and the creation of the 'flying saucer' myth. On 18 November 1912 the MP for Brentford, William Joynston-Hicks, asked the Secretary of State for War in the Commons "whether he can give any information as to a Zeppelin dirigible passing over Sheerness on the night of 14 October." Three days later, Churchill replied on his behalf: "I caused enquiries to be made and have ascertained that an unknown aircraft was heard over Sheerness about 7pm on the evening of 14th October. Flares were lighted at Eastchurch, but the aircraft did not make a landing." Churchill said there was "nothing in the evidence" to indicate the "unknown aircraft" concerned was German in origin. When pressed further as to whether the "airship" was of British origin Churchill replied: "I know-it was not one of our airships."

A number of newspapers sent correspondents to interview witnesses in the dockyard at Sheerness and nearby Eastchurch, headquarters of the naval wing of the Royal Flying Corps. The local paper, the *Sheerness Guardian* reported how at one point on the night of 14 October "several people stood watching that mysterious light as it passed from east to west over the town at great speed towards the harbour, then turned sharply and went off back in pretty much the same direction as it came...the sound of an aerial engine was heard from the direction in which the light appeared." The sighting caused such furore in the Press that newspapers were still discussing its implications in February 1913 when another "airship scare" spread through the country. But behind the scenes there is no evidence of the alarm which a suspected overflight by a German airship *should* have created in the highest levels of the Government. For instance, it took a full month for a report on the incident to reach the Air Department at the War Office. Winston Churchill received details from the Commander of the Torpedo station at HMS Actaeon, Sheerness, just a day before Joynston-Hicks asked his Parliamentary question. This low key approach suggests the "mystery" was deliberately worked up by the Government, alarmed by the growing threat from Germany's Zeppelin fleet in the war which was seen to be rapidly approaching.

It has even been suggested that it was Churchill himself who secretly arranged for a private aviator to make the daring night flight above the naval dockyard as a



ingenious method of alerting the British public to the threat posed by German's growing aerial fleet. Churchill was aware that aerial warfare would one day revolutionise the way that wars were fought and won, and he was instrumental in organising coastal defences against German seaplanes and Zeppelins at the outbreak of the First World War. The evidence which has survived demonstrates how throughout the Sheerness affair Churchill did his best to feed the belief that a German airship had indeed invaded British airspace.

In 1912 both politicians and the Press blamed the nocturnal visit to Sheerness upon a Zeppelin, possibly the *Hansa* (LZ13) or the German Navy airship L1 (LZ 14). The L1, at 518 feet in length, was the largest and most advanced airship of its kind in existence at that time. It had a thin, pencil-form hull containing 793,600 cubic feet of flammable hydrogen stored in special gas cells. The ship made its maiden flight just a week before the Sheerness incident and on October 13 took part in an endurance cruise across northern Germany with a crew of twenty on board, including Count Zeppelin himself. During this flight - which was widely reported in the British press - the L1 flew for more than 30 hours, six of them at 5,000 feet, covering a total distance of 900 miles from its base at Friedrichshafen. The flight was hailed as a great success in Germany and proof of the capabilities of the Zeppelins for reconnaissance missions.

War clouds were gathering above Europe, and in Britain the voyage of the L1 evoked widespread fear that German airships would soon be able to reach the British coastline with ease. The coincidence between the date of the L1's endurance flight and the Sheerness sighting only added to the growing conviction that German airships had already visited Britain in secret undercover of night. The Sheerness story became so persistent that it eventually reached the ears of Count Zeppelin, who sent the following telegram to the editor of the London *Daily Mail*: "None of my airships approached the English coast on the night of October 14."

Rumours surrounding the L1's alleged visit to Sheerness continued through the winter of 1912 and were kept afloat by further sightings of mysterious lights and objects in the sky. Early in 1913 the reports culminated in a national panic stoked by the Press which fanned the growing hostility towards Germany and her allies. Almost every night for one week in February that year, thousands of people across the British Isles reported the headlight and searchlight of a "phantom Zeppelin" cruising through the clear night sky. Although the vast majority of the sightings were caused by the brilliant planet Venus, kites and balloons they brought home to everyone how vulnerable the British Isles now were to aerial bombardment in the approaching conflict. On 14 February a new Aerial Navigation Act was quickly passed through Parliament, prohibiting flights by foreign aircraft over certain prescribed areas with the threat of being shot down if foreign crews failed to respond to signals. The opposition were quick to point out that the Bill was useless because Britain possessed no adequate anti-aircraft gun capable of destroying a Zeppelin from the ground.

Airship historian Douglas Robinson said the Sheerness mystery lent credence to the alarmist rumours of secret visits by German airships which had hitherto been dismissed as fantasy. He shared the view of many British politicians that whether the story was true or not was irrelevant, for the moral was that an attack from the air was now possible for the first time in history. He said: "Reports of phantom airships over England persisted in the manner of the 'flying saucer' craze of our own day and level-headed people, who did not believe that the German naval airship had flown over England, feared for the future when they realised that she could easily have done so."

\*The author wishes to thank Granville Oldroyd for access to his voluminous research material and notes on the First World War rumours which have proved to be an invaluable resource.

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**The UFOs that Never Were.**  
(with Jenny Randles and Andy Roberts,  
published by London House)

Three noted ufological investigators present a range of international case studies where a strong argument for positive UFO identification was once logged but, after the evidence was exhaustively analysed..found wanting. The reader is led through the detective work as it was undertaken by the authors and others and is shown how reported sightings - in some case faithfully recorded and genuinely believed - have proved to be honest mistakes, fakes or false identification.

It is a book with laudable aims. It provides both a salutary lesson for the unquestioning believer, hopefully persuading this element of the readership to adopt a more studied approach, and shows the doubter that many ufologists are prepared to pursue the most stringent evaluations of sightings to further their knowledge and the understanding of others. All those intrigued by the topic will learn from this volume and, at the very least, will be shown that thorough investigations is never wasted.'

# THE UFOs THAT NEVER WERE

JENNY RANDLES,  
ANDY ROBERTS  
& DAVID CLARKE

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David is a journalist by profession with ten years experience as a reporter working for newspapers in northern England. He lives in Sheffield and works as a freelance journalist in public relations.

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His books include *Phantoms of the Sky*, *UFOs: A Modern Myth* (with Andy Roberts, published by Robert Hale, 1990), *The UFOs that Never Were* (with Jenny Randles and Andy Roberts, published by London House) and *Supernatural Peak District* (published by Robert Hale, 2000).

David will be speaking on rumour-inspired social panics and UFO phenomena in the World War One era at the Fortean Times UnConvention on Saturday, April 29.



# KATE TAYLOR



## **TED KENNEDY WAS FRAMED:**





# **THE CHAPPAQUIDDICK PLOT**



**On the night of 18/19 July 1969, twelve people attended a party on Chappaquiddick, a small island off the coast of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.**

**Two of the partygoers fell victim to a political plot.**

**One, Mary Jo Kopechne, lost her life.**

**The other, Senator Ted Kennedy, lost his chance of ever reaching the White House.**

1968 had been a roller coaster of a year. Both Presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy and Civil rights leader Martin Luther King had been assassinated in the first six months of that year. Few in that time could remain unmoved by the growing opposition to the Vietnam War, led by Robert Kennedy, or the Civil rights movement headed by Martin Luther King. Indeed, King and Kennedy had worked together to unite the two most pressing causes in 1960s America.

Following in the footsteps of his late brother, President John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy had begun a characteristically energetic and passionate campaign for the Presidency. His chief opponent was Richard Milhouse Nixon.

One of Bobby's major campaign issues was ending the bloodshed in Vietnam. His brother, JFK, had planned to begin the withdrawal of US troops from Vietnam in 1963, and had issued NSAM#263 on October 11 of that year to begin the withdrawal. On November 22, 1963, he was assassinated in Dallas. Lyndon Johnson became President and on November 26 he issued NSAM#273 which reversed Kennedy's policy and escalated the Vietnam war out of all recognition. Defense contractors, who had closely supported LBJ throughout his political career, profited the most from the war, which had hundreds of billions of dollars spent on it after John F. Kennedy's assassination(1).

By all accounts it would seem that Bobby, the most formidable Kennedy brother, would have beaten Nixon hands down. But it was not to be. Just after midnight on June 5, 1968 Robert Kennedy was shot fatally in the Ambassador Hotel, Los Angeles. He had just won the all-important California primary.

With no real opposition left, the way was clear for Richard Nixon to ascend to the Presidency. And with warmonger in chief Nixon in the White House the defense contractors and the "high cabal"(2), who had engineered the assassinations, were free to profit at the expense of US and Vietnamese lives. Trust in the Presidency would be a further casualty of the Nixon years.

In this article I aim to show that what happened at Chappaquiddick in 1969 was not an accident, but that rather it was a sophisticated plot to keep Ted Kennedy out of the White House, and enable the Vietnam war machine to profit.

Bobby Kennedy's Presidential campaign had been ably assisted by the "Boiler room girls". A team of young women who were completely dedicated to the Kennedy cause. They were: Mary Jo Kopechne, Rosemary Keough, Nance Lyons, Mary Ellen Lyons, Susan Tannenbaum and Esther Newburgh. More than just secretaries, the girls' commitment made their role vital to the campaign.

In June of 1968 Bobby was assassinated and grief overwhelmed the Kennedy family and the Boiler room girls. It had not even been five years since the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

Almost every summer, members of the Kennedy family had travelled to Martha's Vineyard to participate in the Edgartown regatta. But 1968 would prove to be an exception. Bobby's murder was a massive blow to the family and those close to them, but in particular to Ted. The Boiler room girls switched their attention to closing up Bobby's files and his campaign office.

As next in line, the "fallen standard" lay for Ted to pick up. Some tried to pressure him to carry on his late brother's campaign, and run for the Presidency in his place. And had he done so, this author does not doubt he would have won. There was even a "Draft Ted" initiative headed by Mike DiSalle to try and persuade Kennedy to seek the Democratic Presidential nomination (3). But Ted had no desire for the White House, preferring instead to lick his wounds in private.

As time went on, however, the pain in Ted's heart grew less sharp, and it became clear that he would be a front-runner (though undeclared) for the 1972 Presidential election. Jack Olsen wrote: "By the summer of 1969, the buttons [reading "EMK in 72"] were all over the place, and one could also see placards - HAPPINESS IS TED KENNEDY IN 72 - in many a Washington office" (4).

Richard Nixon certainly recognized the threat of a Kennedy candidacy in 1972. He wrote in his memoirs: "During most of my first term I had assumed that my opponent in 1972 would be Kennedy, Muskie or Humphrey; a campaign against Teddy Kennedy would be much more difficult to predict because it would involve so many emotional elements" (5).

Clearly, Ted Kennedy had to be eliminated as opposition if the Vietnam War machine and their favoured candidate were to win.

In the summer of 1969 a Kennedy family contingent went, as in previous years, to Edgartown. A keen sailor, Ted would participate in the regatta. Also participating was Ross Richards, later to be an important witness in the Chappaquiddick plot. Robert Kennedy's son, Joe, was also on the island.

As a thankyou for all their hard work on Bobby's Presidential campaign, a party had been planned to which the Boiler room girls were invited. The party venue was to be a cottage (hereafter known as the Lawrence cottage), a short distance from both the ferry landing and the bridge which would later prove to be so important (See map). The cottage had been rented from the Lawrence family by Ted's cousin, Joe Gargan.

Kennedy himself arrived on Martha's Vineyard at roughly 1pm on Friday 18 July, 1969. He then took the ferry across to Chappaquiddick Island, chauffeured by Jack Crimmins. After racing his boat in the regatta, he returned to Chappaquiddick and went to the Lawrence cottage at about 7pm. By this time he had been driven over the Dike Bridge (see map) twice by Crimmins in Kennedy's



black Oldsmobile 88.

At about 8.00pm, Paul Markham arrived at the Cottage, followed roughly half an hour later by Mary Jo Kopechne and the rest of the partygoers in a rented white Valiant. It would seem that moderate, but not excessive drinking took place at the party. And the Boiler room girls testified at the Inquest in 1970 that Mary Jo had not been drinking that night, and indeed was not a drinker. Esther Newburgh testified that Kopechne had been completely sober at the party and that: " . Mary Jo was not a drinker. Five or six drinks would have been completely out of order with the way she lived. And if a girl who didn't drink had that much to drink you would certainly be able tell if she was more jovial than normal, and she was not." (6) (Blood tests on Mary Jo's body showed .09% of alcohol—equivalent to 5 or 6 rums or whiskeys).

At roughly 11.15pm Kennedy mentioned to Kopechne that he planned to leave and return to his hotel in Edgartown. Mary Jo also wanted to return to her Edgartown hotel. Despite the fact that Crimmins drove Kennedy "on practically every occasion" (7), Kennedy asked Crimmins for the keys to the Olds 88 to drive himself. Crimmins testified at the inquest that "He told me that he was tired and that he wanted to home and go to sleep. He told me that he was going to take Miss Kopechne back; that she wasn't feeling well" (8).

So, according to Kennedy, he and Mary Jo left the party in his car at 11.15 to head for the ferry crossing. In his official police statement, made on the morning of Saturday, July 19, Kennedy stated: "I was driving my car on Main Street [also known also Chappaquiddick Road and Schoolhouse Road] on my way to get the ferry back to Edgartown. I was unfamiliar with the road and turned right onto Dike Road instead of bearing left on Main Street. After proceeding for approximately a half mile on Dike Road I descended a hill and came upon a narrow bridge. The car went off the side of the bridge."

In his statement Kennedy then went on to describe how he could not remember getting out of the car, and how he made repeated

rescue attempts "to see if the passenger was still in the car". Unsuccessful in the attempts and exhausted from them, Kennedy then returned on foot to the Lawrence cottage.

In his police statement Kennedy also stated that "There was a car parked in front of the cottage and I climbed into the back seat. I then asked for someone to bring me back to Edgartown. I remember walking around for a period of time and then going back to my hotel room. When I fully realized what happened this morning, I immediately contacted the police".

But in his TV statement directed at the voters of Massachusetts on July 25, Kennedy's story had a new

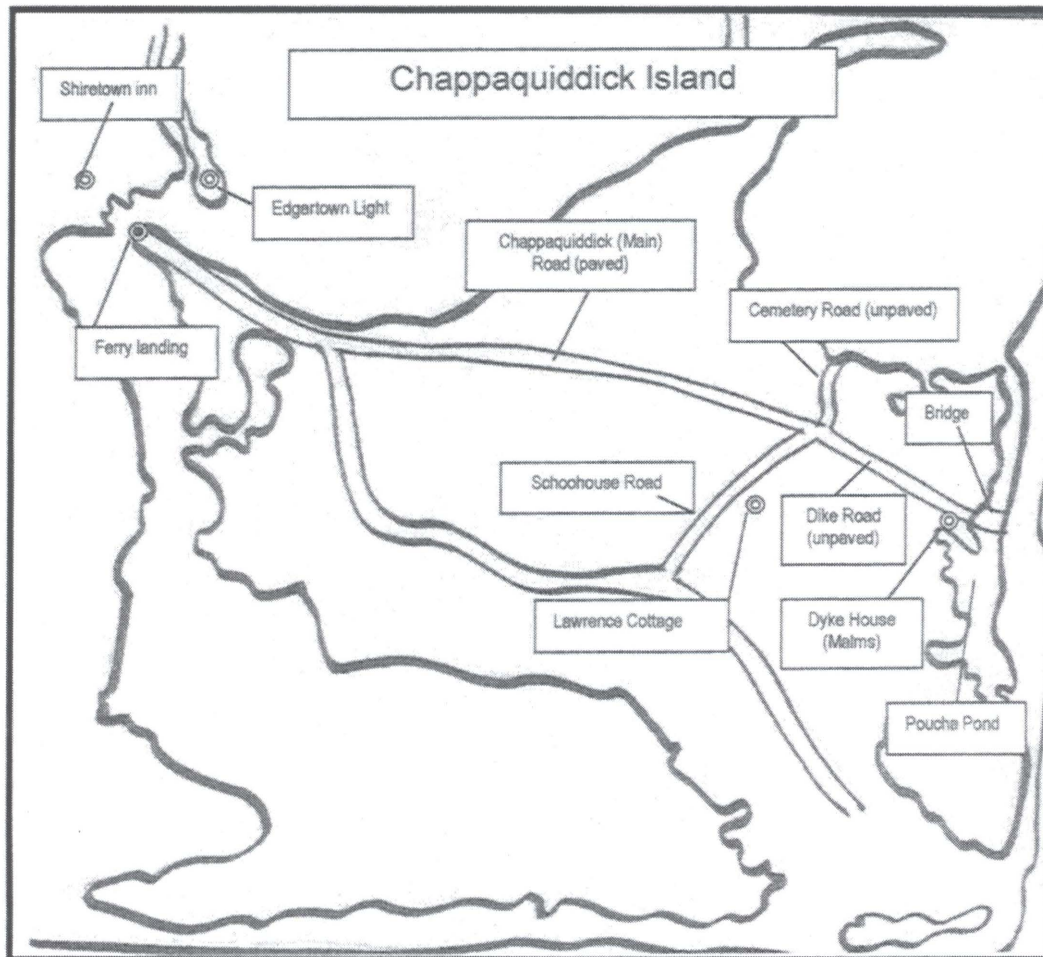
feature. The rescue attempt of Joe Gargan and Paul Markham:

" . I walked back to the cottage where the party was being held, requested the help of two friends, Joe Gargan and Paul Markham, and directed them to return immediately to the scene with me (it then being sometime after midnight) in order to undertake a new effort to dive down and locate Miss Kopechne. Their strenuous efforts, undertaken at some risk to their own lives, also proved futile .

Instructing

Gargan and Markham not to alarm Mary Jo's friends that night, I had them take me to the ferry crossing. The ferry having shut down for the night, I suddenly jumped into the water and impulsively swam across, nearly drowning once again in the effort, returning to my hotel around 2 A.M. and collapsed in my room. I remember going out at one point and saying something to the room clerk. In the morning with my mind somewhat more lucid, I made an effort to call a family legal adviser, Burke Marshall, from a public telephone on the Chappaquiddick side of the ferry, and then belatedly reported the accident to the Martha's Vineyard police".

In these two statements there are numerous inconsistencies and impossibilities. First is 28



## CHAPPAQUIDDICK ISLAND © KATE TAYLOR



Kennedy's statement that he was unfamiliar with the road. Judge Boyle concluded in the inquest, however, "Earlier on July 18, he [Kennedy] had been driven over Chappaquiddick Road three times, and over Dike Road and Dike Bridge twice. Kopechne had been driven over Chappaquiddick Road five times and over Dike Road and Dike Bridge twice"(9).

It should be noted at this point that Chappaquiddick Road/Main Street was a tarmac road, and Dike Road a dirt track. Surely either Kennedy or Kopechne, given the number of times they had been driven over the roads and Bridge that day, would have recognized they were going the wrong way when they realized they were on a dirt road? At the inquest Kennedy testified that by the time he realized he was on a dirt road he had driven off the Bridge. At the speed Kennedy stated he was driving, 20 mph, this would at best seem unlikely.

Furthermore, there is no hill near the Bridge for Kennedy to have descended. Inconsistencies also arise with Kennedy's account of Gargan and Markham's rescue attempt. When Gargan and Markham returned to the cottage, at about 2.15-2.30am according to inquest testimony, no one appears to have noticed their hair

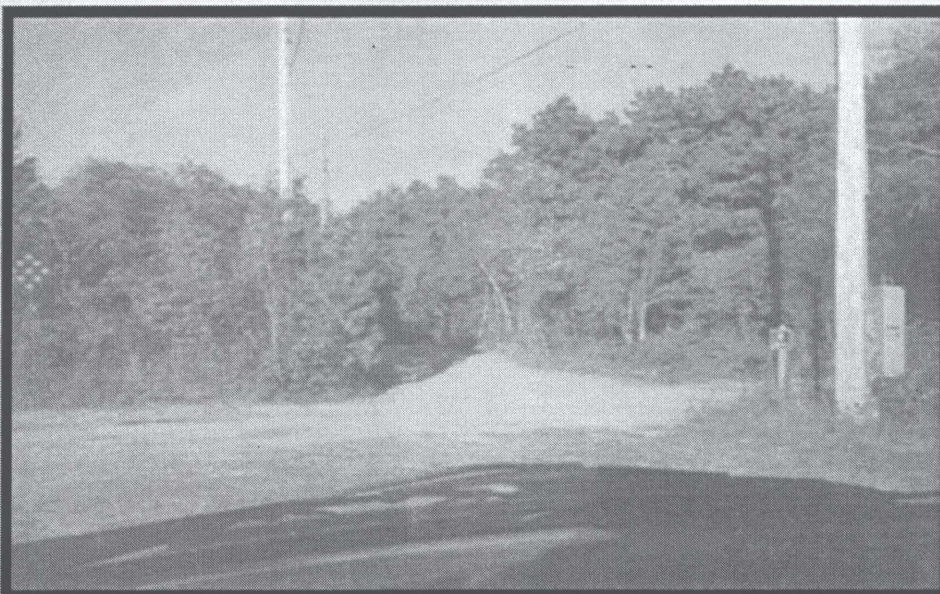
being wet or anything else unusual about them (10). Indeed, they mentioned to no-one what had just took place, their understanding being that Kennedy would report the accident, and that they were not to alarm the girls. On their return to the cottage, according to the inquest testimony of Mary Ellen Lyons, Gargan and Markham told the girls that they had been down at the ferry slip looking for boats to get the party back to Edgartown. They said they were unable to find any, and that the group would have to stay on the island. Gargan told Lyons that Kennedy had swum across, and that he and Kopechne were now back at their respective hotels, the Shiretown Inn, and the Katama Shores in Edgartown. The girls were not told about the accident until sometime after 9am on the Saturday morning, and even then not of her death (11). All that was said was "We can't find Mary Jo".

After their failed rescue attempt, Kennedy told Gargan and Markham that he would "take care of it" which they took to mean he would report the accident. He then impulsively jumped into the water, fully clothed, wearing a back brace, and in the middle of the night, and swam 500 yards to Edgartown. Many residents of Chappaquiddick doubt that Kennedy could have made that swim. This author also doubts it. If he was so

exhausted after his rescue effort and possibly injured in a car accident, how could he have swum so far in so short a time wearing a back brace? Remember that Kennedy arrived back at his hotel seemingly at around the same time Gargan and Markham arrived back after driving to the cottage which was scarcely any distance from the ferry point.(see map).

On reaching his hotel - where no one saw him arrive - Kennedy testified that he went to his room, changed clothes and collapsed on his bed, exhausted. At 2.25 am, according to the office clock of Russell Peachey, the hotel manager, a man he had taken to be Ted Kennedy, (darkness precluded a positive identification), had complained to him about noise.

Besides the swimming testimony, there is other evidence which seems to indicate that Kennedy was not in fact in the car when it went off the side of the Bridge and plumed into Poucha Pond.



Looking towards Cemetery Road (directly ahead). The sharp right turn onto Dike Road can just be seen. © Nanci Blom

On US TV's "A&E Investigative reports" program on Chappaquiddick, expert Robert Dubois stated that the psychological profiles of car crash survivors didn't match those of Ted Kennedy. In his inquest testimony, Kennedy had gone into detail about trying to reach doorknobs, feeling for an open window and even knowing that he was upside down in the car. Dubois noted that it would be very unlikely that Kennedy would have been so

composed and have been able to locate the door handle.

Damage to the car windshield conflicts significantly with Kennedy's testimony about being in the car. At the inquest he said: "There was complete blackness. Water seemed to rush in from every point, from the windshield, from underneath me, above me"(12).

But the car windshield, though extremely cracked, still had safety film holding the glass in place, making it impossible for water to come in through it. How could Kennedy have been so precise about doorknobs and open windows when he was wrong about something as big as the windshield? Was it because he wasn't in the car in the first place?

It is also important to establish that when Kennedy seconded Gargan and Markham for the rescue attempt, he did not state that he had been the driver. According to Gargan's testimony, all Kennedy said was "The car has gone off the Bridge down by the beach and Mary Jo is in it"(13).

Stranger still is that there was no conversation between the three on the way to the Bridge, and that neither Gargan nor Markham appeared to have looked at Kennedy to see if he needed medical treatment. (When he had told Ray LaRosa to get Gargan and Markham, Kennedy was sitting in the back of a rented white Valiant, outside the Lawrence cottage).



He remained in the back seat for the drive to the Bridge.

Many investigators have questioned whether the vast amount of damage to the car, including dented passenger doors, dented roof, bent steel roof bar, scratches on the hood, damage to the left rear view mirror and a cracked windscreen, could all have been caused by the car going off the bridge into the water. Author Kenneth Kappel said: "There is a specific crease in the metal at the middle of the roof brim. That crease would require a direct downward localized force (some specific object) which simply could not have been created by entry into water. Because of the angle of the car's entry into the water a direct localized downward force was impossible. The major point is that you can't have both the bent roof bar and the deep side door dents from entry into water". (14)

It is also worth noting that the bottom of Poucha Pond was soft. It had been recently dredged, so this couldn't have caused the roof damage either.

Earlier we saw that Kennedy stated he walked back to the Lawrence cottage to get Gargan and Markham to help. On his way back to the cottage Kennedy would have passed at least two buildings with lights on, Dyke House (the cottage leased by the Malms), and another house across Dike Road (15). Furthermore, the fire station was near the Lawrence cottage. Why on earth wouldn't Kennedy have stopped for help? He stated that he saw no lights on his walk back to the Lawrence cottage. Could these lights have been an oversight a hastily-constructed cover-up story? As the brother of a President and an Attorney General, Kennedy had a reputation to uphold. He was and is an honest and decent man. So why didn't he stop for help? The only plausible answer would seem to be that he wasn't there.

The testimonies of Sylvia Malm, Christopher Look, and Ross Richards also throw doubt on Kennedy's time frame and whether he was even in the car.

Sylvia Malm's daughter had been reading in her bedroom under an open window on Friday July 19. The window faced directly towards the Bridge, and was roughly 200 yards away from it (16). At about 11.15-11.45 on the Friday night she had "heard a car 'going fairly fast' on Dike Road, but nothing else" (17). If a car had gone off that Bridge, Sylvia Malm's daughter would surely have heard it. What of the

possibility that the car went off the Bridge after Mrs. Malm's daughter was asleep? Sheriff Christopher "Huck" Look's testimony would seem to support this.

Look had been on duty at Edgartown Yacht Club on Friday night. Leaving the club at 12.25 on what was now Saturday morning he began to make his way home. Look had reached the intersection of Chappaquiddick Road, Dike Road and Schoolhouse Road (see map). He estimated the time of his arrival to be approximately 12.45am. He then noticed a dark car coming towards him near the bend of the road and slowed down. The car passed directly in front of Look and drove into Cemetery Road, a dirt track. In his exhumation hearing testimony Look said: "There was a man driving, a woman in the front seat, and either another person or some clothing, a sweater, or a pocketbook in the back seat—what appeared to be a shadow of some kind" (18). Look thought that the driver was lost and walked up to the car to offer help. The car reversed towards him, however, and drove off at speed down Dike Road. Look remembered the car's

Massachusetts numberplate as beginning with L7 and ending with another 7. This was Senator Edward M. Kennedy's car. The same car he saw in Poucha Pond the next morning.

But what of Look's strange testimony that there could have been another person in the back seat of the car? This author finds it particularly odd that anyone could mistake some clothing for a person. Either there was another person in there or there wasn't. The vagueness of Look's testimony here is difficult to understand.

Look's testimony, however, does undermine Ted Kennedy's chronology, for at the time he saw Kennedy's car it was supposed to have been on the bottom of Poucha Pond for over an hour (19). Ted Kennedy's inquest

testimony yet again throws doubt on the fact that he was driving the car.

Q. Did you at any time drive into Cemetery Road?

Kennedy: At no time did I drive into Cemetery Road.

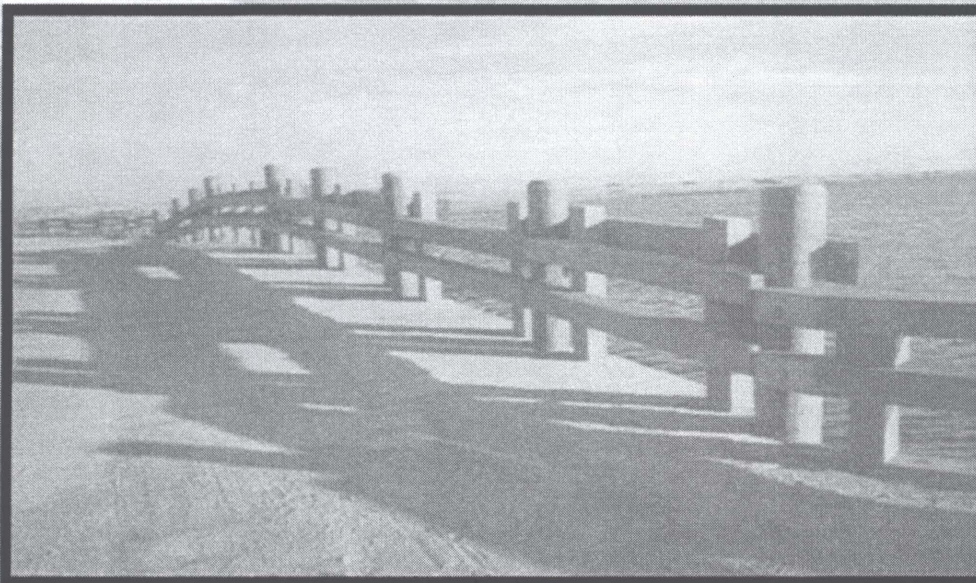
Q. Did you back that car up at any time?

Kennedy: At no time did I back that car up. (20)

So just

who was driving the car? And was there another 30

**"There was complete blackness. Water seemed to rush in from every point, from the windshield, from underneath me, above me"**



Dike Bridge (rebuilt in 1996). The original bridge had only a 6 inch high rub rail.

© Nanci Blom



person in the back seat? We may never know the answer.

Ross Richards, who was also staying at the Shiretown Inn, had been talking to Kennedy on the morning of Saturday 20 July, the day after the accident. They chatted about sailing and "Richards had observed nothing out-of-the-ordinary about the Senator's speech or appearance. Kennedy hadn't mentioned the accident," said Leo Damore (21). Richards testified at the inquest that Gargan and Markham arrived looking "damp" though in an earlier police interview he had said they were "soaking wet". Gargan and Markham then accompanied Kennedy to his room and Richards overheard loud voices (22).

Why were Gargan and Markham wet or even damp at this time? Why had Kennedy been chatting in a normal fashion with no mention of the accident until they arrived? Was this the first Kennedy had heard of the accident? Had Gargan and Markham only just carried out their desperate rescue attempt instead of the previous night?

If this was the case it would certainly explain a lot. For one thing, it would explain why Kennedy waited until 9.45 on Saturday to report the accident. Kennedy, Markham and Gargan left the Shiretown Inn to catch the ferry across to Chappaquiddick, where Kennedy spent a considerable amount of time on a payphone at the landing there. Ferry operator Dick Hewitt and his assistant Steve Ewing were concerned that Kennedy was unaware of the accident and decided to tell him. Jack Olsen said: "They walked briskly up the inclined ramp and across thirty or forty feet to the shack, and as they approached, Kennedy seemed to sidle away from his companions and drift toward a line of parked cars. While the senator was still within earshot, Hewitt said loudly, "Senator Kennedy, are you aware of the accident?" Kennedy disappeared behind parked cars, but one of the other men said, "Yes, we just heard about it." (23)

In the light of this, and all of the evidence above indicating that Kennedy may well not have been in the car, Kennedy's original police statement, "When I fully realized what had happened this morning, I immediately contacted the police", seems far more realistic than his later elaborate TV statement with its elaborate rescue attempts, and repeated statements of guilt.

A lot of the questions which arise about the accident would have been answered if the original doctor, Dr Mills, had requested an autopsy. Ordinarily he would have done, but on advice from the district attorney's office he was told it wasn't necessary. Even without an autopsy, however, the state of Mary Jo's body can give us clues about what happened that night. First of all, the embalming mortician, Eugene Frieh, had noticed that there was very little water in Mary Jo's lungs, far less than would be expected in a drowning case. Secondly, forensic tests

carried out on Kopechne's shirt showed a huge amount of blood all over the back of it, and inside the collar (24). Death by drowning produces some blood, but certainly nothing like that amount.

No injuries were apparent when Kopechne's body was examined, but having been immersed in salt water for hours, they could certainly have healed.

Had Mary Jo been kidnapped and knocked out, or plied with alcohol, as RB Cutler suggests? (25) Certainly, we saw earlier how it would have been unusual for Mary Jo to have had so much alcohol in her blood. The position in which Mary Jo was found in the car indicated to John Farrar, the diver who recovered her body, that she had in fact not drowned, but rather had suffocated in her own carbon dioxide when an air pocket ran out.

Kennedy stated that Kopechne had been in the passenger seat when he was driving. However, on A&E's Investigative Reports Robert Dubois stated that the lack of external injuries to Kopechne would seem to preclude her sitting in the passenger seat. When the car went off the Bridge the people in it would have been thrown towards the right hand side of the car, and Mary Jo in particular - being the passenger - would have thus been badly hurt. And yet she was not. Had the car been ambushed as RB Cutler theorizes in his book *You the jury* (p.35-6), with Kennedy being knocked out, Kopechne plied with drink and then placed in the car unconscious? This could certainly square with the injuries received by the pair. Note that Kennedy had no visible injuries, and Chappaquiddick Police Chief Jim Arena noted: "I found it hard to believe the Senator had been in a major automobile accident. His face bore no traces of any marks" (26). Leo Damore notes that Kennedy's family physician later diagnosed that Kennedy had suffered "concussion, contusions and abrasion of the scalp and acute cervical strain" (27). These are injuries which I believe are more consistent with a blow to the back of the head rather than a car crash of this nature.

No one except Ted Kennedy knows what really happened that night on Chappaquiddick. Kennedy has consistently refused to deviate from his official version in interviews. The effect of Chappaquiddick on his political aspirations has been devastating. Even when he ran for the Presidency in 1980, Kennedy's campaign was still dogged by Chappaquiddick. In a campaign address to the nation he responded to critics of his testimony by saying:

**"My testimony is the only truth I can tell because that is the way it happened".**

That is the way what happened? This is a statement which says everything and nothing. If we read between the lines in the light of what we now know, it seems Ted is telling us he had no choice. As R.B. Cutler points out, Ted was left with a "Hobson's choice" of telling the truth and living "perhaps a month", or creating a cover-up and surviving (28).

I believe the evidence shows that Ted Kennedy was not driving the car that went off the Bridge that night in July 1969. I also believe, from examining the circumstantial evidence, that the "accident" was engineered to discredit Ted Kennedy completely and prevent him from ever reaching the White House and ending the Vietnam War. The engineers, in my view, were the same forces that assassinated Ted Kennedy's brothers, John and Robert, earlier in the decade. Ted was only assassinated politically, but Mary Jo was murdered as part of the plot. This was an assassination like those of JFK, RFK and Martin Luther King.

Richard Nixon, puppet of the high cabal, was keen to exploit the plot to its full capacity, and so make certain Kennedy would not run against him in 1972. He wrote in his memoirs:

"In the short term, I knew that Chappaquiddick would undermine

**"Senator Kennedy, are you aware of the accident?" Kennedy disappeared behind parked cars, but one of the other men said, "Yes, we just heard about it."**



Kennedy's role as a leader of the opposition to the administration's policies. In the longer term, it would be one of his greatest liabilities if he decided to run for the Presidency in 1972.

It was clear that the full story of what had happened that night on Chappaquiddick had not come out, and I suspected that the press would not try very hard to uncover it. Therefore I told [John] Ehrlichman to have someone investigate the case for us and get the real facts out. 'Don't let up on this for a minute I said'."(29)

Robert Sherrill summed up the full effects of Chappaquiddick in his book "The Last Kennedy":

*"Having been Chappaquiddickized, Teddy was never again listened to. He not only survived, but in alternating waves, even thrived as a politician. But he was truly dead as a leader. This perhaps was the greatest tragedy of Chappaquiddick. At no time since World War II had the liberal wing of U.S. politics been in such desperate need of a unifying spokesman, and Kennedy was now trying to fill that role, but without success. The situation was noticed in mid-1970 by Ted Lewis of the New York Daily News: 'He has in the last few months made some of the most powerful, incisive, anti-administration speeches of the times. Little attention has been paid to them nationally, simply because of the present public attitude that Kennedy is no longer a comer, so what if he says this or that.'"*(30)

The High Cabal had won again, and through the puppet administration of Richard Nixon they were free to continue the slaughter in Vietnam. Ted Kennedy was as good as dead:

**"My testimony is the only truth I can tell because that is the way it happened".**

Sincere thanks to Nanci Blom of California, a true Chappy expert, for all her valuable assistance and encouragement in the preparation of this article.

#### References

(1)See my article "A willing accomplice?" (SD no. 18/ Unopened Files no. 13) for more information on this. (See also Fletcher Prouty's "JFK: The CIA, Vietnam and the plot to assassinate John F. Kennedy". (Citadel, 1996).

(2)What I term the "high cabal" are also known as the "global elite". For more information on the actions of the cabal, with particular relation to JFK, please see L. Fletcher Prouty's "JFK: The CIA, Vietnam and the plot to assassinate John F. Kennedy". (Citadel, 1996).

(3)See Olsen, Jack, The Bridge at Chappaquiddick, (Little, Brown & Co., 1970) p. 48.

(4)Ibid, p.62

(5)Nixon, Richard, The memoirs of Richard Nixon, (London, 1978) p.665

(6)Zeiger, Henry A. (Editor), Inquest! Ted Kennedy - Mary Jo Kopechne prosecution or persecution? (New York, 1970). p.132.

(7)Ibid, p.20

(8)Ibid.,p. 93

(9)Ibid., p. 154

(10)Only Gargan and Markham's hair would betray their rescue attempt, as they dove into Poucha Pond nude.

(11)Inquest!, p.135-6

(12)Ibid., p.27

(13)Ibid., p.68

(14)Kappel, Kenneth, Chappaquiddick revealed. (Lamplight, 1989), p. 200 (See p.198-203) for a full examination of the damage to the car.

(15)Damore, Leo, Senatorial privilege, (New York, 1988), p.390

(16)Investigative Reports interview.

(17)Damore, p.163-4

(18)Exhumation hearings p.59, quoted from Senatorial Privilege, p.103

(19)See Cutler, R.B., You the jury . in re: Chappaquiddick, (3<sup>rd</sup> printing, 1980, Massachusetts), p.28

(20)Inquest!, p.21

(21)Damore, p.255

(22)Ibid, p.255-256

(23)Olsen, p.121

(24)Cutler, p.16

(25)Ibid, p.35-6

(26)Damore, p.21

(27)Ibid, p.45

(28)Cutler, p.39

(29)Nixon, p.543

(30)Sherrill, Robert, The Last Kennedy, (New York, 1976) p.218



**Described as the greatest non-event of the second and probably the third millennium, the advent of the year 2000 will provide much useful material for historians and sociologists of the future, as well as teaching a valuable lesson to parapsychologists.**

Firstly, let us consider the most hyped aspect of the new millennium, the Y2K bug. This attracted the most attention because it seemed to have a basis rooted in science rather than religion. The threat seemed credible and billions of pounds were spent worldwide in an attempt to overcome the problem. Planes would fall out of the sky, security systems would deny access to buildings, lifts would cease to function, public utilities would fail, food supplies would soon run out leading to rioting in the streets, the list is endless. Even respected financial publications advised their readers to get end of year statements for all the accounts they held, with the result

# MILLENNIUM

that financial institutions sent customers leaflets assuring them that all was well and spokesmen pleaded with customers not to deluge them with requests for statements. Householders were advised to stock up with essential foodstuffs including bottles of water.

**No-one seemed to question any of this.** And yet, borrowing from my experience of doomsday predictions in the field of parapsychology, I found myself unconvinced. Just why was I standing in a supermarket queue with a six pack of bottled water? "I don't know why you've bought all this stuff", complained my wife surveying the pile of 'essential items' covering the floor of the spare bedroom. Neither did I, to tell the truth. Having worked in my employer's computer department for some time back in the seventies I was well aware of the problems associated with using two digits for the year to save precious computer memory. I can recall the Chief Programmer reminding everyone at the time that we must all remember to change our programs before the year 2000! Incredibly four of the staff from those days are still in post, and we did remember to change any old programs still surviving, long before most people had even heard about the problem. We were amazed that anyone could supply programs in the mid nineties which did not recognise the year 2000! How stupid can you get?

The date problem would be particularly severe in the third world, which relied on old computers, we were told. But why? All you had to do was set the year to 1972 and all would be well. In any case, simple fixes for most computers had been available on the front of computer mags years before the event. I just couldn't see what all the fuss was about!

by just how few bug-related problems actually arose. The experts, trying to wipe the egg from their faces, explained that it would take a while for the effects of the bug to become apparent although by mid January the bug appeared to have died a natural death. If the money hadn't been spent, we were assured, chaos would have resulted. But wait a minute, countries such as Italy, the Ukraine, and many African states which had spent minimal amounts on the bug, did not seem to suffer any problems. So was there really a problem?

Well, yes there was, but it was known and quantifiable, and probably less troublesome than the introduction of the Euro or new legislation. The real reason for all the fuss stems from our culture and worldview. No longer are we governed by the God of religion, but by the God of science. And that God was threatening to fail us, our continued well-

being seemingly in doubt. In a previous religious era, events such as the August eclipse of the sun, the current planetary conjunctions, and December's New Moon would have provoked a similar reaction as the Y2K bug (that these events passed without incident comes as no surprise!). And so it is with the bug which was nothing more than a reflection of the prevailing scientific belief system and the fears that it engenders. In the past our ancestors sacrificed animals and performed rituals to appease the gods and guarantee their well-being, today we spend millions to appease the God of technology for the same reason.

The lesson for parapsychologists is clear. There is, and always has been, a need for some kind of psychological crutch, without which the human spirit is overwhelmed by the mundane and often miserable existence which is the lot of mankind. In the past (at least in the western world), religion has exercised that function and its importance as a control system has long been recognised by grateful Governments. Today, however, Technology has replaced the God of past times, bringing many benefits to improve humanity's lot and resultant wealth. Scientific scare mongering needs to be viewed in a



new light, and the same critical standards applied as in the field of parapsychology.

Which brings me to the growing revolt against scientific materialism, the new age of spirituality. Its adherents behave in the same manner as the followers of science. In the run up to the Millennium I have been distracted by the mounting excitement of those who assured me that -

The lesson for parapsychologists is clear. There is, and always has been, a need for some kind of psychological crutch, without which the human spirit is overwhelmed by the mundane and often miserable existence which is the lot of mankind

and whereas I agree that 1999 was the worst year on record for natural disasters; they can largely be explained by global warming and factors, such as the gravitational effect of the moon, at the time of an eclipse.

As parapsychologists we have a tendency to study predictions and then attempt to assess their accuracy. What we fail to perceive is that we are really dealing with a form of religious belief, arising from an unfulfilled spiritual need, and indeed often aided and abetted by spiritual forces of a highly questionable nature (the Biblical injunction of "Test ye the spirits" is relevant here, and is echoed by some of today's New Age teachers who warn followers against uncontrolled channelling).

# WAAAAADNESS

Parapsychologists should stick with what can be measured, photographed and analysed, and not fall into the trap of studying those who make a religion out of their experience. In practical terms this means analysing ground traces at the site of UFO landings rather than listening to the utterances of channelled aliens; it means trying to photograph ghosts and to record sounds in haunted locations rather than consulting mediums. If we can produce scientific evidence for a scientific age, then that is progress.

"something big is about to happen", the eclipse last August would be the start of a series of major natural calamities, and the planetary conjunctions around the millennium would be of tremendous import. Shortly before Christmas I was solemnly told that the alien invasion fleet had been detected by satellite and would arrive by next week at the latest (belief in an alien takeover by the end of 1999 was widespread). Of course none of these things have so far happened,



## MICHAEL LEWIS

has always had a fascination for the paranormal. He has been investigating hauntings for thirty-five years, but only recently saw his first ghost! Initially sceptical about UFOs he now sees them as part of a much wider spectrum. Latterly he has become interested in crop circles which he feels should be investigated scientifically as they could offer sound physical evidence for the existence of a phenomenon. He is an active member of BUFORA, ASSAP, CCCS and the CFPSS (Churches' Fellowship for Psychical & Spiritual Studies). He has headed ASSAP's investigations team for the past ten years."





## From the Observation Deck - Eye on the sky

**O**ver the last few months I've been busy observing the stars of Winter, plus the regular showing of planets and the Moon. In the West, following the Sun down over the horizon, are the gas giants Jupiter and Saturn. Jupiter is the brighter of the two, shining like a beacon as the night falls. This year Jupiter and Saturn have mimicked last Winter's combination of Venus and Jupiter in the evening sky, only last year Venus was the brighter planet. Mars is also among the little grouping of planets, and the 6th April sees a conjunction of all three with the crescent Moon, two days after new, about 45 minutes after sunset. If you have a 35 mm camera, try taking some photographs of these planets during April; if you don't have a tripod and cable release, just try resting the camera on something steady such as a wall or the roof or bonnet of your car. Exposures on standard 100ASA film should be around an eighth of a second, but bracket the exposures as the length of time needed will vary according to how dark the sky is when you photograph it.

The bright Winter patterns of stars (most notably Orion and Canis Major, containing Sirius the brightest star in the night sky) are following the planets low into the western twilight and are being replaced by the less showy Spring constellations. In comparison to Orion, Gemini, Canis Major and Minor and Auriga, the spring sky is rather barren, with Leo and Ursa Major (high above) being

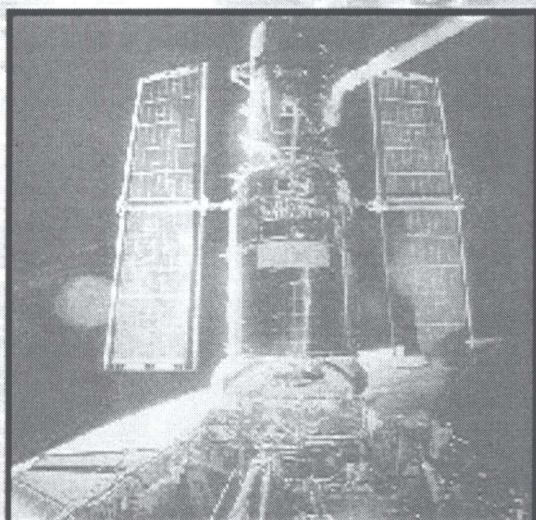
# Newtonian

the most noticeable groupings. There is a reason for this: As we look out at the sky into the direction of Leo, we are looking out at right angles to the plane of our galaxy, the Milky Way, where most of the nearby stars are located. So we really are looking out at a less well populated piece of sky - but only as far as nearby stars goes. By avoiding the Milky way we have a clear window to the intergalactic space beyond, and the Spring constellations of Ursa Major, Leo, Virgo and Coma Berenices are prime territory for hunting galaxies. For those amateurs with reasonable size telescopes, Spring is galaxy hunting time until the nights become too light towards the start of May. Backyard astronomers are then restricted to observing the Sun, Moon and planets until the nights start to draw in again. The Perseid meteor shower centred on the 13th August generally marks the end of the Summer observing break.

Galaxy hunting is a good time to reflect on the vastness of the known universe. Our own galaxy is a whirl of 100 billion stars floating in space. Each of the other galaxies we see in the Spring sky lie millions of light years away, and contain roughly similar numbers of stars. The Hubble Space Telescope has shown that even "empty" pieces of sky contain many thousands of faint distant galaxies. The universe is unimaginably vast - but it doesn't hurt to try every once in a while.

This month sees the tenth anniversary of the Hubble Space Telescope (HST) in orbit, and will result no doubt in a flood of pretty PR pictures from NASA and the HST Institute. From being derided as a gigantic flop when the flaw in its primary mirror was detected, the fixed HST has become the single biggest tool in the optical astronomical arsenal today. While it would be wrong to say that Hubble has revolutionised our understanding of the Universe, it has filled in many of the blank spots and raised many new questions. Compared to the big telescopes in ground based observatories, Hubble is only small - anything bigger wouldn't have fitted in the Space Shuttle.

But without the blurring effects of the Earth's atmosphere, it operates at its theoretical diffraction limit and offers us an unparalleled sharpness that ground based instruments just cannot compete with. But Hubble has also had a greater effect. The wonderful images that it has captured are great for public relations, encouraging



Within ten years, if all goes well, we should see the launch of a large space telescope that will make Hubble look like a mere toy - a mouth watering prospect for any researcher.



# Science

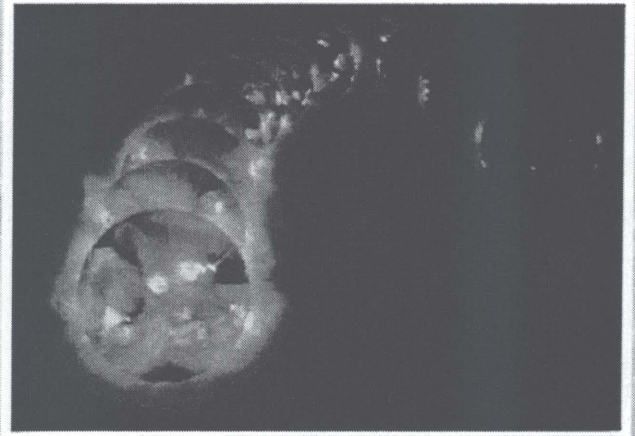
public interest in space and science. And such an accessible visual product shows you straight away what your dollars are paying for, unlike so much research. Hubble has done much for the public understanding of science, and in 10 years has increased our understanding of the universe more than 50 years of ufology has. Within ten years, if all goes well, we should see the launch of a large space telescope that will make Hubble look like a mere toy - a mouth watering prospect for any researcher.

## Extra-solar planets - 33 and counting

The pace of astronomical discovery continues unabated. A few short years ago we reported the first discovery of a planet outside of our Solar System, and the current total is 33. In fact, by the time this article makes it into print the total will probably have gone up. The first discovery, of the planet around 51 Pegasi, was made by Michel Mayor and Didier Queloz of the Geneva Observatory in 1995. The planet itself wasn't seen, but its existence was inferred from the wobble in the motion of the star around which it orbits. This is nothing new. The Doppler effect, as it is known, causes lines in a star's spectrum to shift slightly as the star moves towards us and away from us. This is easily seen in spectroscopic binary stars, where two or more stars orbit around each other closely and rapidly. At some point in the star's orbit it will be moving towards us along the line of sight, and sometimes it will be moving away from us (except in the occasional binary system where we are viewing the stars at a right angle to the plane of the binary orbit). However, stars are massive objects and the resulting Doppler shifts are noticeable. Planets such as Earth and even Jupiter - big enough to contain 1100 Earths - induce only very small wobbles in the orbit of their parent star because the star is so much more massive than they are. The centre of gravity of the star-planet system is very close to the centre of the star so any wobble and Doppler shift in the star's spectrum is tiny. But now it is measurable. The technology to do this grew out of the field of study known as helioseismology a few years back. The sun is a giant ball of hydrogen and helium, producing energy at its centre. As that energy makes its way outwards, it causes the star (which isn't a rigid body, of course) to ring like a bell; or to be more accurate, it wobbles like a jelly. The wobbles seen on the surface of the Sun, known as the different modes of vibration, tell us about the structure of the Sun and how the energy produced inside is transported to the visible surface. Those modes of vibration make parts of the Sun's surface move towards us and away from us alternately, producing a small Doppler shift. The same technology used to measure these vibrations on the Sun is now being used to look at other Stars and determine if they are wobbling in their orbits slightly because of planetary systems around them.

The planets detected so far are big, because they produce the biggest Doppler shifts. But every year the technology gets better and the ability to detect earth like planets is pretty much here. The only remaining part of this story is for some of these

Doppler detected planets to be confirmed visually by direct observation - an incredibly difficult task because the glare of a star is so much brighter than the reflected light of a tiny planet. But this is what one team of astronomers have recently managed to do, they believe.



A spectrum of Tau Boötis taken by Andrew Collier Cameron at the University of St Andrews shows spectral lines from a blue green gas giant planet which orbits around the star with a short year lasting only 3.3 days. If confirmed by other researchers, this will be the first time that any information will have been directly observed from an extra-solar planet, rather than inferring data from the effect it has on the parent star.

This research is important, for up to now we have only had our own planet and solar system to study. It is always hard to draw meaningful conclusions from a sample of one. Let us take a subject familiar to most UFOlogists, the Drake Equation. Is life common in the universe? Are we unique, and alone? This equation, by multiplying various quantities together, lets us estimate the number of civilisations in our Galaxy at this time. However, the quantities used in the equation are so uncertain that it yields an answer anywhere from one (i.e. we are alone in the Milky Way) to several million civilisations. But this new research is showing that planetary systems seem to be fairly common. When we start to get figures for the number of earth like planets around nearby stars, and when we start to get spectra telling us what their atmospheres are made up of, we will be able to make more meaningful estimates of the abundance of extraterrestrial civilisations and perhaps give us a list of targets for directed SETI - searching particular planetary systems for signs of life and civilisation, rather than the usual, present blunt method of listening out for any radio signals that may come our way.

## Life on Earth

While this exciting research is telling us about how likely life may be on other planets, new research on our Sun and similar stars is telling us about the prospects for life on Earth. In the last article I wrote for SD I looked at comets and asteroids and how collisions may affect our planet. But earth crossing comets and asteroids are not the only dangers to life we have to contend with. In the last article I also mentioned the giant molecular clouds the Solar System sometimes crosses and how chemical reactions may alter the composition of our planet's atmosphere. This is another item on the long list of dangers we face in the long term. Also on the list are nearby



supernovae (which would shower us with a lethal dose of radiation), a nearby merger of neutron stars (also unleashing a lethal dose of radiation), a passing star

if an event such as the Maunder minimum (when the 11 year sunspot cycle shut down in the 16th and 17th centuries and the solar output appears to have dropped by one quarter of a percent)

can cause crop failures and the coldest snap for 10,000 years, what will a 10 percent increase do to global temperatures? Ultimately, higher solar temperatures cause increased evaporation of the oceans. The ultraviolet light from a hotter sun dissociates the hydrogen and oxygen from the water, and the hydrogen escapes into space. Put simply, the oceans boil away and the earth becomes a lifeless desert. On

.....however you look at it, our future lies out in Space. Because ultimately, we have no other option.

disrupting the orbits of the planets and throwing us out into interstellar space, and a collision with a passing black hole.

But somewhat less exotic and more inevitable is the gradual heating up of the Sun as it ages.

Present models of the Sun, Solar System and geophysical evidence point towards the Sun being about 4.6 billion years old and roughly half way through its life. Fossils show that life on earth evolved within the first billion years and has been going strong - with the occasional extinction event - ever since. So you would hope that the Earth would be habitable for a few billion years yet until the Sun starts to run out of hydrogen fuel and swells into a red giant star, frazzling earth to a crisp in the process. But the more we learn about the Sun and the way our atmosphere and oceans absorb heat, the shorter our future becomes.

Within the core of the Sun nuclear reactions stick protons (the particles in the centre of hydrogen atoms) together to form helium nuclei, releasing energy in the process. The temperature and pressure in the centre of the Sun aren't high enough to fuse helium into anything bigger, so the centre of the Sun gradually fills up with inert helium "ash". While the mass in the centre of the Sun remains largely unchanged, the number of free particles decreases because one helium nucleus contains four particles welded together, which were previously four separate items. This results in the core contracting, getting slightly hotter and increasing the pressure as it does so. This in turn increases the rate of the fusion reaction, so the sun begins to brighten. Over the next few billion years, the Sun will brighten steadily and evenly until it runs out of hydrogen totally in its core in approximately 5 billion years time. The question is, just how much will it brighten by over the next billion years, and what effect will it have on earth?

The answer is uncomfortable. Latest models predict that the Sun will be 10 percent hotter than it is now in 1.1 billion years time. Which may be catastrophic for the Earth. Our atmosphere, oceans and polar caps provide a thermostat that evens out minor variations in the Solar output and leaves us with a comfortable environment. But

a shorter time scale, as the earth warms slightly it increases the rate of erosion. This results in carbon dioxide from the air dropping to the bottom of the ocean as carbonate rocks. Increased cloud cover reflects some heat back into space and less carbon dioxide in the air reduces the greenhouse effect, resulting in Earth growing hotter at a lower rate than the Sun does. But having less carbon dioxide in the air has the unfortunate effect of starving plants of their essential gas. Between 200 and 500 million years from now, most of the plants on Earth will be unable to photosynthesise; food chains will collapse, and life as we know it will come to an end.

Two hundred million years is a long way off. But it is strange to think that if we extended David Attenborough's book *Life on Earth* into the future, we would nearly be at the final chapter. While this poses no immediate threat, hazards such as asteroids do; however you look at it, our future lies out in Space. Because ultimately, we have no other option.



## DAVE NEWTON BSc

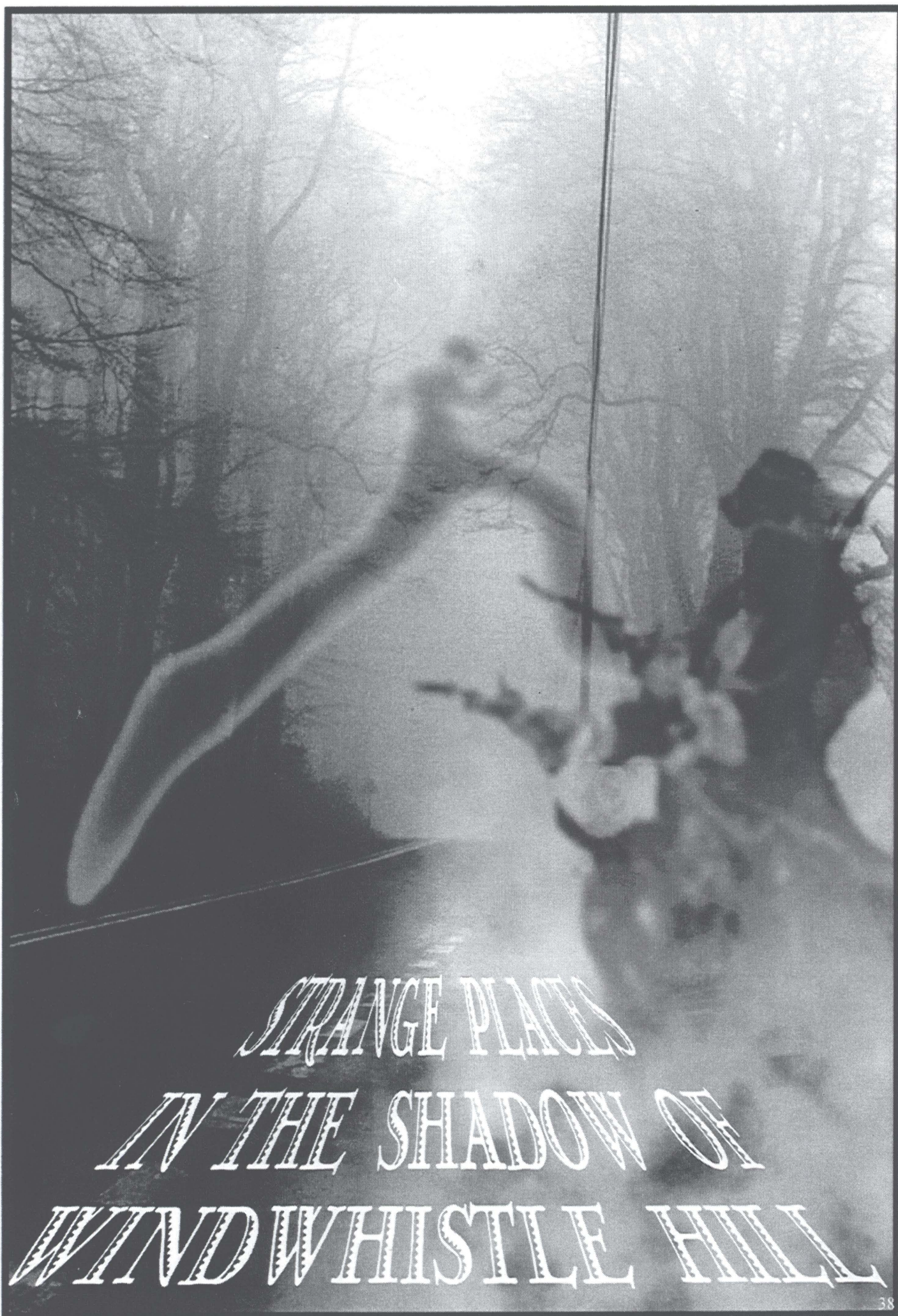
Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and President of the Sunderland Astronomical Society.

Founder editor (for he's a jolly good fellow) of *Strange Daze*, he now prefers to do something grown up and produces *The North East Observer* for the local astronomical community.

When he's not doing astronomy or changing nappies, he works in Newcastle for the Overseas Branch of a government agency.

Still plays a mean guitar.





*STRANGE PLACES  
IN THE SHADOW OF  
WINDWHISTLE HILL*



*'It is the destiny of man to stand always between the certainty of his scientific achievements and the annoying evidence that they do not account for all there is. Other forces manifest. We are quick to give them convenient names and familiar roles. We call them ghost, spirits, extraterrestrials. When all else fails we abjectly turn them into gods, the better to worship what we fail to grasp, the better to idolize what we are too lazy to analyze.'*

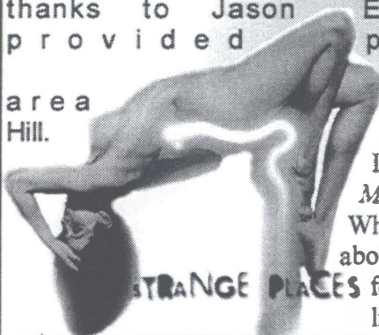
*....the only thing that counts in this life is to question the mystery of it, with all the means at our disposal, with every moment of awareness, with every breath.'*

*....Dr. Jacques Vallee  
(Forbidden Science)*

In this issue of Strange Daze, we would like to take our readers through one of those mysterious and strange places that some of us journey through from time to time. We will do this in the company of Kate Walker and her family, who underwent two extraordinary events in September of 1977, whilst travelling from Yeovil to Chard. Let us begin this voyage and look at their remarkable experiences and what they may show us in terms of the human consciousness and our perceptions and understanding of inexplicable events.

In order to create an overview of these events you will need to be aware of the background to this area, which stretches back hundreds of years creating the mythology and folklore surrounding the area, specifically Windwhistle Hill.

However, before I do I would like to extend my thanks and appreciation to several past BUFORA investigators, who contributed to this case. They are Robert Moore, who lives in Somerset and worked on researching the area from library archives and books. John Heptonstall, who conducted investigations and research into this case and interviewed Kate and her eldest son in the North of England where they now live. Last, but not least, I would like to extend my thanks to Jason Eastwood who provided photographs and information about the area around Windwhistle Hill.



In his book *Ten Somerset Mysteries* Charles Whyne-Hammond tells us about the geographical features of this area. It lies at the southern tip of

Somerset and stands over 700 feet above sea level where two coastlines can be seen from the summit.... The Bristol Channel and the English Channel. Made of sandstone, limestone and green sand it is covered by woodlands of tall beech trees. Cricket St. Thomas lies below with the market town of Ilminster and they are surrounded by countryside and small villages. It is a sparsely populated very lonely and remote area especially on dark nights.

Whyne Hammond goes on to tell us about the more mysterious side of Windwhistle named very aptly because of the winds whistling through the tall treetops. He tells the reader about strange lights, sounds, figures and shapes, unusual and eerie phenomena in this area, and motorists who hear a tap-tap on their car window

A book published in the late Seventeenth Century referred to a number of mystical reports made during the year 1662 by the people of Chard and Crewkerne. These towns are situated at either end of Windwhistle Hill. Whyne Hammond also points out that although UFO observations were made by individuals and small groups, other strange phenomena were seen universally by people living in South Somerset.

**R**eports of strange visions and incidents have continued to date and according to the literature during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Windwhistle had a history of highwaymen and smugglers in this area. The A30, used to be a coaching route from London to the West Country and highwaymen could hide in the beech trees waiting for the carriages with their cargos of valuables. It has been suggested that the Windwhistle Inn near the summit was the central point for these highwaymen, who would use the wells and caves all around the area to hide their treasures and also the bodies of those they had robbed. The story goes that some skeletons have been discovered in these hideouts.

Alan Holt, in his book on *East Somerset* comments that it appears that Windwhistle Hill itself is haunted by a witch, who allegedly was knocked down by a stagecoach many decades ago. The devil is said to be buried beneath Windwhistle Hill and it appears that many travellers in this area have experienced strange incidents at night and stories of ghosts and witches abound building up the mythology surrounding this area.

In *The Folklore of Somerset*, Kingsley Palmer mentions the stories of smugglers on Windwhistle Hill and how these narratives have remained as a powerful image within the minds of local people. One of these accounts chronicles a bloody incident, which involved excise men and smugglers ending in bloodshed and murder. These tales impart descriptions of ghostly encounters with the spirits of this chase encompassing sounds of horses and riders.

And with this brief history, I hope to have given you a flavour of the scene and atmosphere of this locality together with the folklore that has become attached to this region

IN SEPTEMBER 1977, Kate Walker her husband and two young sons, aged seven and six years old were returning home to Chard from visiting relatives in Yeovil. They left Yeovil at 9.30pm and were driving on the A30 approaching Windwhistle Hill, a couple of miles outside of Chard and a very isolated area.

As they came to the top of the hill Kate and her family all observed a huge orange light diffused by cloud, to their left-hand side and at the far end of Windwhistle Hill. It seemed to be right beside the road, not very high up, and was partially obscured by cloud, but they did not feel any alarm as there was a power



station and pylons further along. However, as they drove nearer to the light, it was easier to observe and Kate states it was massive and totally static and very low and bright. She describes it as being cigar shaped and vast in size, maybe 200-300 feet, and she estimates the light to be approximately 800-1000 feet above them. As they got closer she noticed that the pub on the right hand side of the road, The Windwhistle Inn, was almost in total darkness, except for a light in a small upstairs window.

Kate looked at her watch to check the time as she felt it was strange that the Inn was in darkness so early as it was very popular and she remembers wondering why it had closed so early.

The time was 10.10pm, and Kate looked up again at the light, which was almost on top of them by now right beside the road. She felt very uneasy and told her husband to 'put his foot down'.

The next thing she was clearly aware of was seeing a cyclist's headlamp coming the other way, which seemed to appear from nowhere, and continued on the road to Crewkerne.

Upon arriving home Kate discovered, curiously, that it was now 10.50pm. Their journey from Windwhistle Hill should have taken them only ten to fifteen minutes maximum; therefore she felt there were twenty-five to thirty minutes that appeared to be unaccounted for. As her husband did not remark on this possible time discrepancy, Kate just forgot about it, but on reflection finds this odd due to the fact that their journey from Windwhistle Hill should have only taken a maximum of fifteen to twenty minutes.

A few days after this puzzling incident, Kate and her family were once again making the journey back to Chard after visiting relatives, and as they were coming over the brow of the same hill, and about 200-300 yards from the first incident, they saw in front of them on the left hand verge, two people, one who appeared to be lying down, and the other standing. Their initial thoughts were that someone had been injured and went to slow down, when to their astonishment, the person standing took one step out in front of them.

***..one foot remained on the grass verge at the roadside and other foot was right over the centre of the road!.***

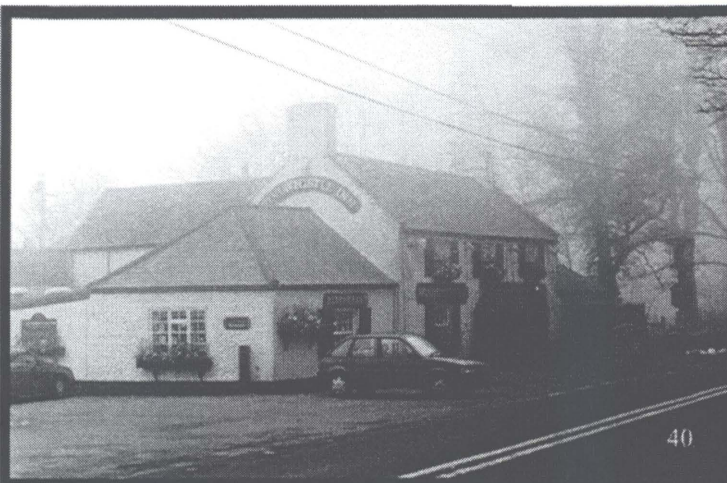
Kate describes the figure as being 'abnormally tall with legs that were horrendously long and thin'. Her husband swerved to the far side of the road, and around the figure, and they kept on driving and did not look back. They all agreed that there was no one who could possibly have legs that long. Kate fully expected to hear something about this in the local paper, maybe someone being injured or taken ill on Windwhistle Hill, but she never heard anything about an incident there at all. She has commented to me that it seems very odd in retrospect that they all took these events so calmly and just got on with their lives, and never discussed it at all.

**T**his story becomes more significant eighteen years later, when Kate, now remarried and her sons now aged 25 and 26 years, were intriguingly finally discussing the events of that night. The three of them were together talking about family holidays and the places they use to go together when Kate ask them both whether they recalled the orange light they had seen beside Windwhistle Hill. This generated a conversation on their personal recollections of this night. Her eldest son, Jeff's recollections refute the fact that they had driven under the object. He can recall Kate telling his father to 'put his foot

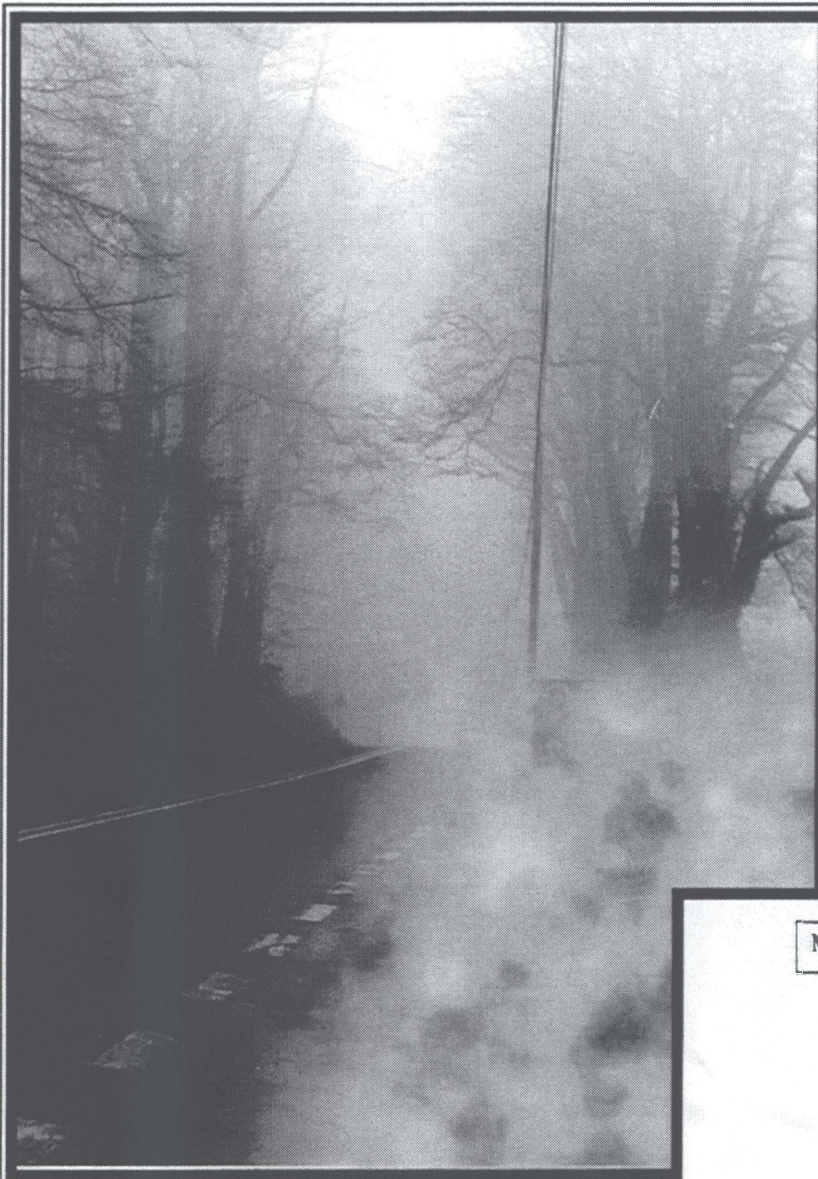
down', but says that as he did so 'the engine died, and the headlights went out'. His father started to panic and tried to restart the car, but nothing happened. He goes on to say that at this point *things became very strange and everything was in slow motion*. He recalls his father lunging across the front of the car to the passenger seat and at the same time there was a very deep, humming vibration, slow and rhythmic. The passenger door was open, but he comments that he couldn't understand why his Dad lunged across the passenger seat as he had no recollection of his mother being in the passenger seat and all memory of her had gone. He then remembers his father punching the dashboard repeatedly, but everything was still in slow motion with no sound. He felt frightened and turned to ensure his younger brother was okay but Tony was looking out of the side window and seemed excited, but Jeff didn't know why, and his father was pointing and obviously shouting, but Jeff could not hear any sound *and somehow things were different*. He then realised his father was looking past him out of the back window and was terrified. Tony was kneeling on the back seat looking out of the rear window and pointing at something saying "Look Jeff, look Jeff" and although Jeff could now hear him speak... *his lips and movements were again in slow motion*.

Jeff then realised that there was something behind the car and felt almost paralysed by terror. He put his head down and covered his face and then for some reason said he had no memory of Tony either in the same way as he had no memory of his mother, Kate. He felt there was only himself and his father in the car. He could then see a white light through his fingers so he looked up and the light was everywhere, inside and outside of the car. It was a very bright white light and he describes it as *... like being inside lightning... but it didn't hurt his eyes*.

His last memory is of seeing a dark shape outside the car, beside the window. He describes it as being very tall and bending toward the window looking in, and having the impression that the shape was human, although he knew it wasn't, which was the reason he was so afraid. Jeff's next memory is of looking back at the orange light and seeing the 'headlamp' coming towards them only a few yards away and he remembers saying 'where's he come from'. He then looked back and the orange light had gone. He explains that initially he only remembered seeing the orange light, the cigar shape, and hearing and feeling the hum and vibration. Through the years fragmented memories of that night have returned, but as no one talked about it he felt he shouldn't mention it. He also recalls just after the incident that boys at his school were talking about strange sightings at Windwhistle Hill. Jeff's vague recollections of the incident are that he did lock the car







door when his mother told him to and that he never looked behind, but can recollect knowing there were five black figures. He also feels... in his own words...*that all four of us were taken and that when something looked in at him through his window, it was his turn to 'go'*. This, Kate, emphasises is not just a feeling, but a conviction.

Jeff goes on to say that he seemed to recall these events more clearly in 1996 when he, his brother and Kate were finally talking about this incident. They were all surprised to find that they had varying memories of the event, except for their observation of the huge orange light and the time discrepancy

I would like to conclude this with Kate's comments in her letter to me where she writes... I find it incredible thinking about it now, all these years later that we could have dismissed it so casually at the time. We just never discussed it and life went on as usual. It has been a great relief to tell someone.

Robert Moore has conducted research into this particular area in order to establish whether similar cases have been documented here. Interestingly, there were observations of unusual lights and an entity over a ten year period at Cricket Malherbie which is within 3km north west of Windwhistle Hill.

generated a number of unusual reports from around this area, some of which I would like to mention here.

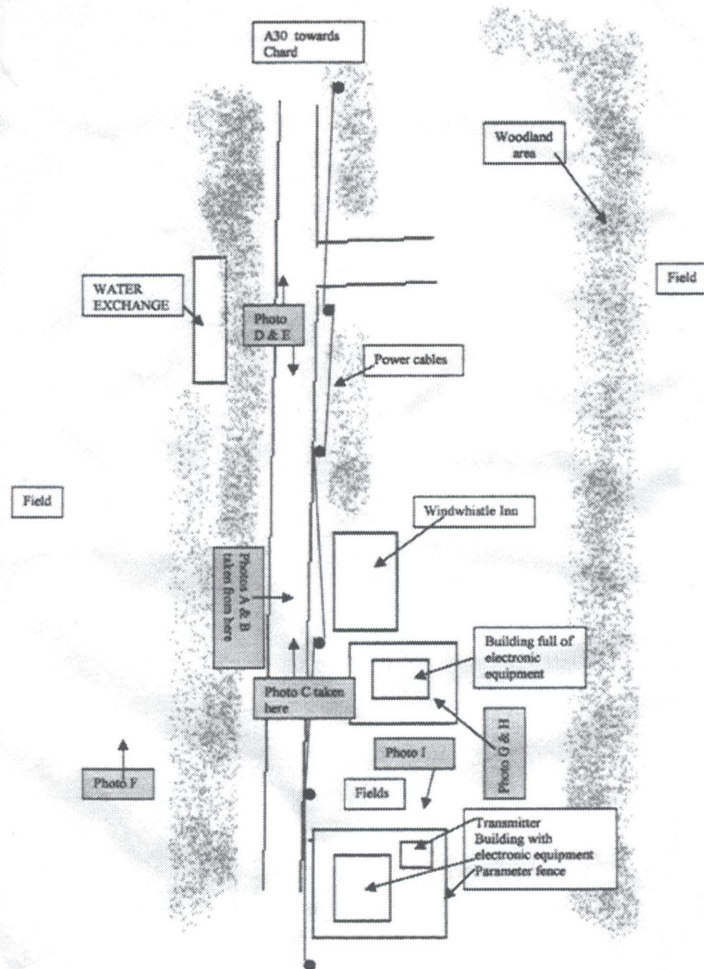
Witness A tells of a strange incident experienced by her husband, grandson and herself in 1991, which involved what they perceived as a tall strange figure, which they claim was looking through the farm window followed a few days later by their observations of a 'saucer-shaped object'.

Witness B tells of a similar experience to the Walker family on Windwhistle Hill in 1975, which happened to her mother and father (now deceased).

Witness C tells of a strange experience on Windwhistle Hill whilst driving a lorry either in 1976 or 1977. He claims that his lorry went out of control as though by some strange force. This took place over a distance of about 100 yards or so and then he seemed to recover normal control. He felt as though the lorry was hovering over the road whilst he was experiencing this.

Witness D. tells how she and her husband observed a very large unidentified object, silver and shaped like a humming top, near Windwhistle Hill in November 1959. They watched it as though 'hypnotised' from about 23.00 to 09.00 hrs the next morning and for some reason felt unable to tell anyone.

Map of the local area around Windwhistle Inn



MAP NOT TO SCALE



Witness E. was employed by Westland Helicopters at the time of Kate Walker's sightings and feels that the light she saw was probably a Sea King Helicopter, sporting a 'nitesun' beam, on trials.

**S** o... what did happen to the Walker family on Windwhistle Hill in 1977?

Astronomical information would be speculative particularly as Kate cannot remember the date of the sighting, only that it was late summer and probably September. Another sighting of an unusual flying object was observed on 12<sup>th</sup> September 1977 as recorded by the *Chard, Ilminster, Axminster Newspaper*. This was described by the witness as an orange glow, fairly high in the sky and moving quite fast from West to South.

This may or may not be important in establishing a date for the Walker family's sighting, as this sighting may not be related to their own observations. However, Kate is convinced that this would indeed have been the date of their sighting, particularly as her son Jeff remembers that this occurred a few days after his return to school following the summer holidays.

The moon could have been a candidate for misidentification, so cannot be ruled out and there have been incidents where the moon has been reported as a UFO. Venus, Mars and Jupiter were not candidates as they were not visible between June and September 1977 at 22.10 hours.

There are power lines, in the area so were electromagnetic fields responsible for the memories of this night due to their effects upon the human brain as highlighted by Albert Budden's research? Could this interface be responsible for this family's perceptions of these extraordinary experiences?

John Heptonstall interviewed Kate and her son Jeff in 1997 and in his report he writes:

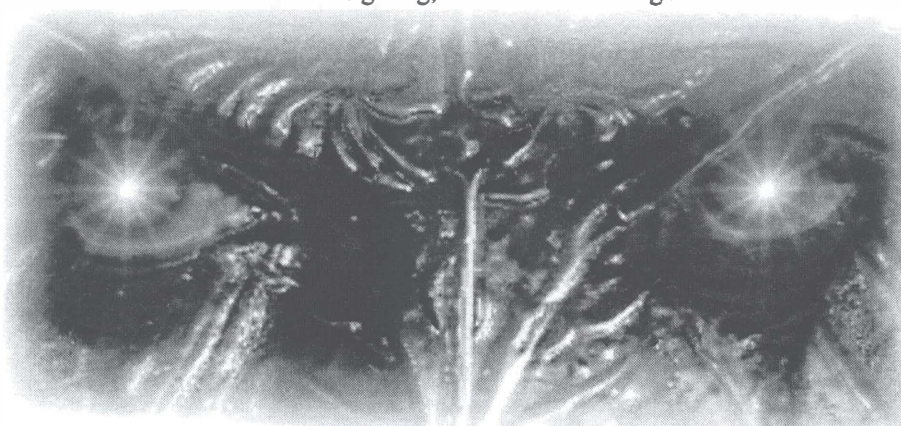
*This explanation cannot be ruled out if the transmitters were there in 1977. It*

*could certainly explain other strange experiences people have had locally. For example Witness C's lorry being taken over and the very subtle effects an EMF event could have on his brain activity as well as an effect on the motor and some types of ignition systems being more susceptible to EMF events than others.*

John goes on:

*I do not believe that EMF effects will explain most of the unusual events witnesses have recorded. For example, the Walker case would be more difficult to explain as EMF hallucination although not impossible.*

We then of course come to the important issue of memory retrieval and the problems with eliciting an objective truth about a strange event.



***'she knew something was wrong and the figure did not look like a normal human being,'***

*that biographical memory is essentially a re-constructive process in which only some elements of past experience are stored and are retrievable. Far from being recovered unchanged, he demonstrated that memories may be reconstructed and elaborated by all kinds of subsequent influences.*

It is obviously becoming more and more apparent that we need to understand the functions of memory and memory retrieval in a much more comprehensive way in order to realise the fallibility of accurate memory retrieval specifically in relation to an understanding of these inexplicable experiences

This is of course, significant and it is interesting that eighteen years later, aspects of the incident were specifically remembered in this way by Kate's eldest son, Jeff. At the time of the incident Kate remembered only some odd things, such as the pub being in darkness except

An extract, from the British Journal of Psychiatry on the psychology of memory, states.

*It is popularly believed that memory operates as a video recorder with events being recorded and stored, awaiting recovery essentially as they were laid down. Memory is, however, a much more complex and less efficient process. Bartlett showed*

*for a light in an upstairs room. Jeff remembers this as being the same colour as the orange light on the hill. Kate also remembers feeling something was wrong and*

*asking her husband to put his foot down. Furthermore, she feels that there was something strange about the time involved in driving from Windwhistle to their home in Chard. Kate's sister recalls vividly that Kate specifically commented to their Mother about this incident remarking on the unusual orange light and the time discrepancy. The*

***.....The engine cutting out  
Screaming at the boys to lock their car doors  
Something looking through her side window  
Five black figures walking up to the car from behind  
Her husband lunging to grab her and to pull her  
back....and then NOTHING***



younger brother, now in his twenties, did not wish to participate in the interview with John Heptonstall as he only really remembered seeing the huge orange light. Furthermore, he did not experience the same sensations about this incident as Kate and Jeff.

Kate's vague recollections were discussed eighteen years on when they finally talked about this incident. Her recollections were not evident for her immediately afterwards, but during their conversation Kate found she had vague memories and a dreamlike recollection of

*The engine cutting out*

*Screaming at the boys to lock their car doors*

*Something looking through her side window*

*Five black figures walking up to the car from behind*

*Her husband lunging to grab her and to pull her back....*

*and then...nothing*

With regard to the second incident, all four people in the car remembered this. I spoke with Kate again recently and asked why they did not stop in a remote area like this when it appeared someone was hurt and the figure appeared to be flagging them down to stop. Kate tells me that she did not feel guilty at all about not stopping because *'she knew something was wrong and the figure did not look like a normal human being.'* Her husband made the decision not to stop and had to actually swerve around the figure right over to the other side of the road.

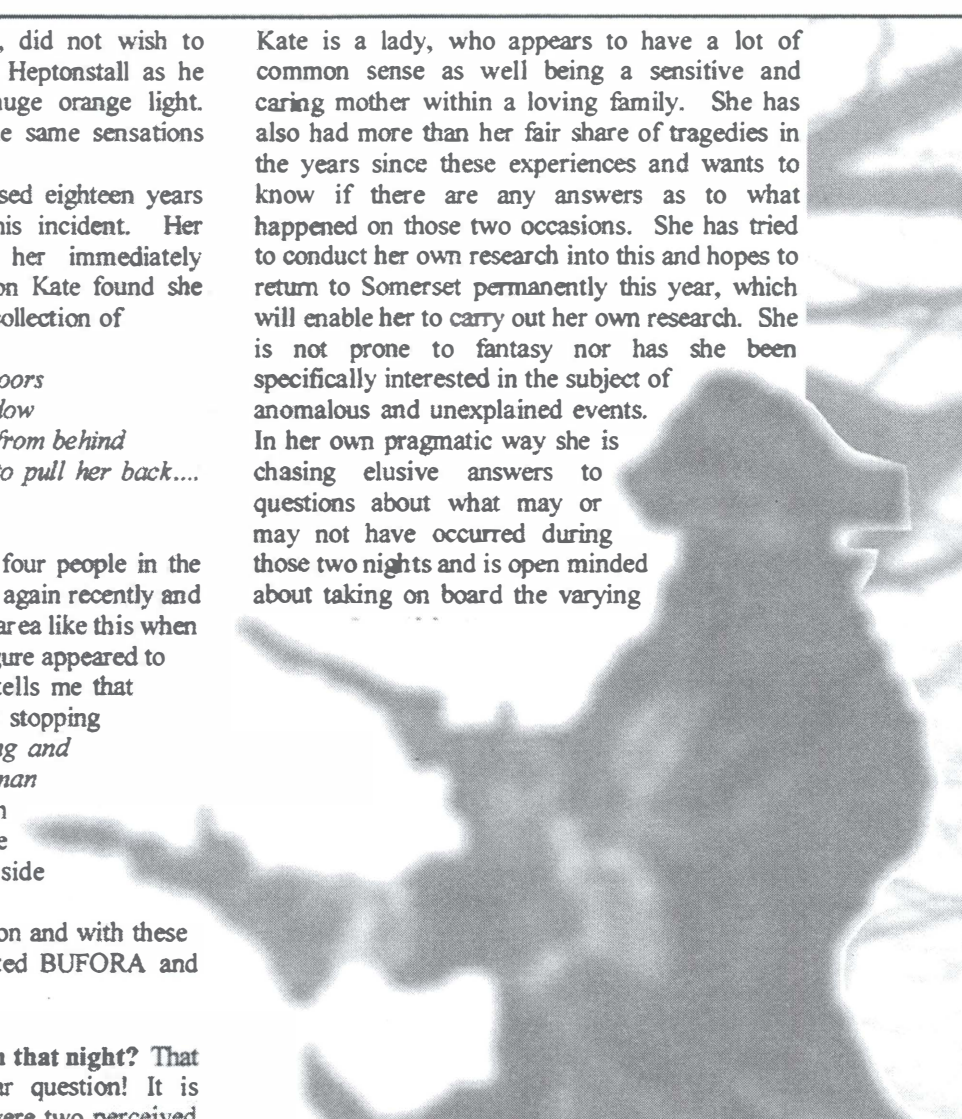
Two to three months after their discussion and with these recollections on her mind Kate contacted BUFORA and telephoned me in the summer of 1996.

**S**o, again I ask what did happen that night? That of course is the million-dollar question! It is interesting is it not that there were two perceived unusual events within a few days of each other. I have spoken with Kate on the telephone several times since she reported these experiences as well as communicating by mail in recording this case.

John Heptonstall conducted his interview with Kate and her eldest son in 1997 and documented this interview in a subsequent report to BUFORA. It is unfortunate that Kate and her family have had no contact with her husband at that time so he certainly is not aware that Kate has contacted BUFORA. Furthermore, this is a sensitive family matter and therefore it is unlikely that a BUFORA investigator could talk with him at any future date in order to obtain corroboration and his version of events. However, Kate hopes that at some stage she may be able to talk with her ex-husband about the events that night, which would possibly add some vital information and create some further understanding of the Walker family's experiences during both nights. John comments too that *something* happened which caused both fear and concern for the family.

It appears that there is a history of odd occurrences in this area and certainly Windwhistle Hill is steeped in the traditional folklore of strange lights, visions and figures with ghostly highwaymen and galloping horses. Tantalising stuff, but *is there any substance to all of this?* Well, none that can be evaluated in order to give any definitive answers.

Kate is a lady, who appears to have a lot of common sense as well being a sensitive and caring mother within a loving family. She has also had more than her fair share of tragedies in the years since these experiences and wants to know if there are any answers as to what happened on those two occasions. She has tried to conduct her own research into this and hopes to return to Somerset permanently this year, which will enable her to carry out her own research. She is not prone to fantasy nor has she been specifically interested in the subject of anomalous and unexplained events. In her own pragmatic way she is chasing elusive answers to questions about what may or may not have occurred during those two nights and is open minded about taking on board the varying



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theories of possibilities. However it is essential that we understand the crucial issue here, which is that both Kate and her son Jeff feel absolutely that something occurred on those two nights that defies a rational explanation.

This case is still under investigation, but it is noteworthy that there was a second incident on this hill a few days later. There are far more questions than answers here and many problems with this report, not least of which are the twenty-three years that have lapsed since it occurred and the major problems connected with objective and accurate memories from that night.

It is remotely possible that Kate and her family saw something that could have been explained if followed up at the time and the perceived anomalies of the pub being closed, the time discrepancy and other apprehension were due to the trigger of the huge orange light being perceived as a UFO. The added effects of this remote and isolated area at night time may have further induced some kind of fear and unease for the family. Even the second incident of the two figures by the roadside may have been some kind of misperception due to the possible unconscious effects of the previous incident. These are possibilities but many years on would be difficult to prove as a possible cause.

What of the memories so many years later, a pattern that has certainly been evident when looking at these type of experiences, where people claim they can remember more detail and clarity about a long forgotten incident. Is this because of the imagery that has been absorbed into our consciousness creating perceived and subjective models to explain what happened... and let us not forget the other influences of EM fields that may have contributed here.

Jason Eastwood gives more information about the area after taking photographs last year. He states that the area around the Inn is deserted and surrounded by fields and woodland on all sides. The weather can move in on the area very quickly and soon cover the area with dense fog. Power cables run along the main road and past the pub. Next door to the Inn there is a building full of electronic equipment. Across the next field is a transmitter and another building with electronic equipment with a sign stating the site is owned by Vodafone. On the opposite side of the road is an underground water exchange, which looks like a WWII bunker and is not visible from the road. Obviously some of this will not have been there in 1977.

These are, as I say possibilities, but one has to then understand that Kate and her sons feel strongly that they have curious memories of very unusual and disturbing events that night.... fragmented though they may be. In my contacts with Kate, I have always found her to be someone who very badly wants some answers to two incidents that she cannot understand, even all these years on. We cannot and should not force our own interpretations upon this family's experiences without fully understanding the wider picture of these bewildering human journeys and thereby we have enormous difficulties, as there are a vast sea of theories out there, which try to explain what may or may not have happened that night. Questions about the Walker family's experiences and the melting pot of others like them are becoming more defined and visible as people describe an ever-increasing number of extraordinary human experiences. These encounters encompass all manner of amazing tales such as out of body experiences, near death experiences, after-death communication, alien encounters, missing time, visions, time warps and so on.

**It is my belief** that we should recognise that these curious reports remain very much human issues. Whether or not they are connections to other worlds outside our view of reality, or whether these experiences are psychological in nature, or whether they are created by natural phenomena and earth energies that we have yet to understand and harness, OR whether they are powerful electromagnetic fields interacting with the brain, OR other functions of consciousness, OR some of these things OR all of these things, OR none of these things, it is crucial that we try to grasp a small concept of the essence of what may be happening and as Roger Penrose asserts ...*the ultimate mystery of existence is the human consciousness.*

**To conclude I leave you all with these questions.** What is consciousness? Is it only a function of the brain/mind interface? Was an external source responsible for the experiences of the Walker family? Did this source create an altered state of consciousness leading to this family's personal understanding of these peculiar events. Or was there something else happening, which for some reason on these particular nights, in this specific area, accessed doorways to those other worlds, which appear to be real and yet which are not real in the physical sense and therefore are not occurring in our perception of the physical world? Does this make them any less real to the experimenter and do we have any way to explain these experiences within the limited capacity of our language and the powerful imagery and culturally visual models that we access in trying to comprehend these mystical events. **What are the true nature of these strange human experiences and do they have a real value for us in terms of our spiritual journeys and encounters?**

I would like to extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to Kate Walker, Jeff and Tony for allowing *Strange Daze* to document their experiences on Windwhistle Hill in 1977.

Should any reader feel that they have any further information that may relate to these incidents, could you please feel free to contact me by letter, fax or email. Both Kate and Jeff would appreciate any information regarding these events that could shed some light on these two incidents.

References: This article is based upon a lecture presented by Gloria Heather Dixon for the British UFO Research Association (BUFORA) on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2000.

*\*Kate Walker is a pseudonym*

**SD Extends thanks to Mike Caddy, Landlord of "The Windwhistle Inn"**

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# EVENTS & INFORMATION



## THE BRITISH UFO RESEARCH ASSOCIATION (BUFORA).

Web-site: <[www.bufora.org.uk](http://www.bufora.org.uk)>

### FORTHCOMING BUFORA LECTURES

**Sat 3rd. June 2000 -MALCOLM ROBINSON.**  
**University of Westminster.Marylebone Road**

*Something Strange In The Scottish Skies.* Founder of the research group Strange Phenomena Investigations (England & Scotland), Malcolm will be presenting 'new' UFO cases from Scotland. He will be discussing a UFO that was witnessed from a passenger airliner, and will be showing Scottish UFO video footage. Malcolm will also present information which clearly shows that Bonnybridge was a UFO 'hot spot' for far longer than has been imagined. There will also be some new revelations about the famous 'Livingston Incident' (!!) Don't miss it.

### PLEASE NOTE CHANGE IN DATES AND VENUE -

**First Monday nights of the month.** All lectures will be held at the Quaker International Centre, 1 Byng Place, London, WC1E 7JH. Tel: 0207 387 5648. (Nr. the British Museum). Lectures begin at 7:00pm and end at 10:00pm.

**Nearest Tube Stations: Russell Square, Euston Square, Goodge Street.**

**ADULTS £4:50. BUFORA Members £2:50.**

**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September 2000. GEORGE WINGFIELD.**

*New Perspectives On The UFO Phenomenon.* George will be discussing all his latest findings in regards to the mysterious 'black triangles' that have been sighted throughout various parts of the United Kingdom. What's going on? Come to this lecture and find out.

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2000. JERRY ANDERSON.**

*UFO Sightings Over Kent.* Jerry will be discussing numerous cases from Kent, Burmarsh, and Gravesend, looking at cases from as far back as 1954. He will be looking at close encounters of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd kinds and showing various segments of video accompanied by slides. There is even a case in which the then Home Secretary, Michael Howard, was involved. All in all, Jerry's talk aims to be 'thought-provoking'.

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November. 2000 REG PRESLEY.**

*Going Around In Circles !* Reg is the front man for the still-going British pop group 'The Troggs' whose songs, 'Wild Thing' and 'Love Is All Around' were major smash hits. Reg will be discussing his research and personal involvement with the British crop circle mystery. What lies behind it? What do all these circles that appear in the wheat and corn fields of England mean? Reg has his own ideas! Reg was also linked to the Roswell alien autopsy footage, and will explain his part behind it. Don't miss this lecture.

**Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2000 RICHARD CONWAY**  
*Unlocking the Biblical Code*

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### UFOIN (UFO INVESTIGATIONS NETWORK)

UFOIN is a very different kind of UFO network. It is not a membership group. UFOIN is run by investigators for investigators and with 100% of it's resources devoted to this task. It exists purely to conduct objective, In-depth investigations to well- honed scientific principles. It will conduct new research that will answer basic questions about the UFO mystery.

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**Special Thanks this issue to:**

Mike Caddy at Windwhistle Inn.

**The views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the editor & staff.**

**Marketing:** Ian Dixon (Three Cheers!!!)  
**Printed by:** XEROX (0191) 4902316

**Advertising:** Free at the Moment; if you would like to advertise your business or product, please send all information, c/o Adverts manager.

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To find in ourselves what makes life worth living is  
a risky business, for it means that once we know we  
must seek it. It also means that without it life will  
be valueless.

.....Marsha Sinetar